THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The Oldest Literary and Family Paper in the United States. Founded A. D. 1821.

Entered according to an act of Congress, in the year 1881, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress. *Entered at the Philadelphia Post-Office as Second-Class Matter.*

Vol. 62. PUBLICATION OFFICE, No. 700 SANSOM ST. PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1882. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. FIVE CENTS A COPY. No. 15.

THE ANSWER.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

"Love?—I will tell thee what it is to love!
It is to build with human thoughts a shrine,
Where Hope sits brooding like a beauteous dove:
Where Time seems young, and Life a thing divine.
All tastes, all pleasures, all desires combine
To consecrate this sanctuary of bliss.
Above, the stars in shroudless beauty shine;
Around, the streams their flowery margin kiss;
And if there's heaven on earth, that heaven is surely this.

Yes, this is Love, the steadfast and the true,
The immortal glory which hath never set;
The best, the brightest boon the heart e'er knew,
Of all life's sweets the very sweetest yet!
Oh! who but can recall the eve they met
To breathe, in some green walk, their first young vow,
While summer flowers with moonlight dews were wet,
And winds sigh'd soft around the mountain brow:
And all was rapture then which is but memory now!"

RED RIDING-HOOD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL; OR, THE MYSTERY OF ST. EOLON," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX. [CONTINUED.]

"DOES she know Lord Enderby's history?" asked the president.

Then, without waiting for a reply, he turned to Grace.

"He was one of us once—the bravest and most enthusiastic in a devoted band of patriots.

"He was young, poor, unknown in those days; titles and riches had not fallen to his lot to obscure and pervert his mind. He was in Russia—in a large mercantile firm—a Scotch firm; he saw atrocities committed openly in the name of law and tortures inflicted secretly in the name of justice. A young friend of his was seized on suspicion of being a Nihilist.

"He died in prison. I will not tell you how; it is enough that he died, and that death made young Fitzurse a Nihilist. A year afterwards he was a traitor to our cause, and its bitterest enemy."

"But not without a reason!" cried Grace. "He was justified doubtless! He looked for patriotism, and he found plots. It is the curse of grand words that they deceive even those who utter them.

"Your noble sentiments, your generous theories are all shattered to dust against your crimes.

"You are conspirators, and the very breath of conspiracy is treachery."

"Do you call us conspirators? True, we are! And Mazzini was a conspirator; Garibaldi was a conspirator.

"Every great man who has knocked a shackle from the world has done it by the hand of violence.

"The best lives are those which have been sacrificed in this warfare, and have perished in the flames, on the scaffold, or in prison.

"The martyrs of this age are the heroes of the next."

It was Delgado who spoke, his wonderful beauty lighted up by the fire of the single enthusiasm that warmed his cruel crafty nature.

His outburst was listened to with a murmur of applause, the president alone seeming impatient as he turned to Grace for her answer.

"But your warfare is against women and children," she said; "and it is of a child I am come to speak."

"I imagined so," returned the president. "But let me finish the history of this man; you are pleading for him now in ignorance. Delgado, turn back in our register and read out what is written against him."

A swift and cruel pleasure gleamed in Delgado's eyes as he did this, and he glanced at Grace as a man who felt his triumph close at hand.

The record affirmed that a certain task (not named) had fallen upon young Fitzurse by lot, but, in a fit of cowardly weakness, he had expressed horror of the duty demanded of him, and had refused to undertake it, although he knew the penalty of disobedience was death.

This was not his only crime, for he had denounced the plot to the authorities, and five of the conspirators were seized—two were executed, and three were sent to Siberia in chains.

Delgado closed the book, with a look at Grace, and laid his hand upon another register bound in black; but the president motioned to him to close it.

"For those victims slain, for those lives suffering exile and slavery," he said, "Alan Fitzurse was justly condemned to death by our Executive Committee.

"That sentence still stands against him, and will be carried out when the right hour comes.

"He owes us his life for disobedience; but, because he turned traitor and spy, he owes us more; therefore we decreed vengeance against him and his. We have let him know that, like those men, his victims who are perishing in Siberia, he shall live homeless, wifeless, and childless. He dared to take a wife—she died; he has a child—it is ours; we have taken it."

There was a momentary breathless silence.

Grace felt that words stood on the door of her lips which would ring out in their ears like the bursting of a torrent; but she held them back with all the force of her strong calm nature.

Great as was her emotion, her self-control was always greater.

Words, she knew now, were useless; her weak hands might as well strive to seize the lightning as her speech endeavor to stay the flood of these men's vengeance.

In the stillness, as she held her breath, as she held down the shriek of pain that seemed ready to burst from her heart, she glanced at Lady Brentwyche.

There was something on her face that arrested her gaze; there was a pinched paleness about her lips, though her cheeks were rose-red with fever, and over all her aspect there was a horror like that of a person shrinking from the expected blow of a knife.

As her eyes met Grace's, she lifted her large fan and hid her face.

A sudden light rushed upon the darkness in which Grace stood, a sudden inspiration seized her.

She felt sure that it was not Lord Enderby who had denounced that plot, whatever it might be, to the Russian authorities. He had permitted the suspicion to fall on him, and suffered a cruel sentence to be pronounced against him, rather than divulge the truth and give the real culprit into their hands to die.

That culprit was Lady Brentwyche.

A conviction of the truth dawned upon Grace with a certainty that allowed no doubt to rest in her mind.

"Lady Brentwyche," she said, "you knew Lord Enderby at the period in his life spoken by this gentleman. Have you no word to say in his favor? That he left the Nihilists I believe; that he betrayed them I do not believe."

The fan fell slightly and over its rim Lady Brentwyche's eyes looked searchingly into those of Grace.

Was it, could it be possible that Lord Enderby had been confidential with her? She could not tell; but she rose in fear of her thoughts.

"I have much to say for him. Mr. President let me remind you that he was young—too young for the duty that fell upon him by lot."

"Lady Brentwyche, I remember his age; it may excuse his cowardice, not his treason.

"Either it was he who divulged the secret trusted to him, or there is a spy among us here at this moment. That I know to be impossible."

The fan covered Lady Brentwyche's face again; she fell into her chair for just a second, then rose gracefully, her pretty light laugh on her lips.

"Impossible indeed!" she said. "Yet let me plead one word more for a man once my friend.

"You will recollect he fell ill with fever, he was delirious; perhaps he raved of things he would never have divulged, and thus affairs got known which brought misfortune on heroic lives."

"You nursed him, Countess," observed the president.

"Had such a danger arisen through his illness, you would have taken precautions and you would have reported the matter to us.

"You are generous to plead for him, but you have forgotten the circumstances of the case."

There was a slight movement of the fan, a tiny shrug of white shoulders, which said plainly to Grace—

"You see I have done my best."

"Lady Brentwyche could not have been always in a sick-room," observed Grace, her lips trembling slightly.

"It is not fair to give Lord Enderby the benefit of your doubt, and believe rather that some servant, some paid spy, caught words from his fevered wanderings which were reported?"

Lady Brentwyche held her fan over her face again; she murmured some slight complaint of the heat, and moved her chair farther from Delgado, farther from the light falling from the lamp.

"Unfortunately we cannot hold such a doubt," returned the president; "we know for a certainty that some one trusted with our secrets betrayed them circumstantially, with full particulars, not in disjointed talk and ravings.

"The person who did that could only be Lord Enderby, unless one of us here present is a traitor and a spy—a thing utterly, outrageously impossible," he concluded, with heat in his voice.

For a moment Grace was silent, and she dared not raise her eyes to look into Lady Brentwyche's guilty face.

She felt that such a look might be her death-warrant.

"Will you let me say a word more," she asked pleadingly, "and not be angry?"

"We shall not be angry with Valdivia's daughter, though she does not understand our cause against it."

"I want to say that many might feel that to divulge a plot of yours would be a righteous act; but, knowing Lord Enderby as I do"—a faint color touched her cheek, then flitted away—"I feel sure it would not appear so to him.

"He left you for honor's sake; that same honor—doubtful honor perhaps in his case—would make him hold your secret safe, because they were entrusted to him under a seal, under a bond, which you did not think then he could talk.

"I can understand that it would be very dreadful to him to keep silent, knowing of something terrible that you were going to do, something that would cost lives; but I think—I know—he held his peace. Oh, he must have suffered horribly! It was this, I am sure, that gave him fever."

Her pleading hands had been held straight before her, clasped earnestly, but now she covered her face with them, and for a moment strength and calmness broke down.

"Mademoiselle di Valdivia need not distress herself for lives which did not fall," observed Delgado with sarcasm. "It was the Nihilists who perished, it was they who died, they who suffered exile, imprisonment and torture, they who are still enduring the agonies of a hideous martyrdom. Out of pity I will not tell her the secrets of a Russian prison, for her father—the fourth victim to Lord Enderby's treason—is beneath that iron rule; but every one here knows that I can speak—that I bear the marks of Russian fetters, which will go with me to that scaffold on which I shall doubtless die!"

His words again made an impression, again strengthened that detestation of Lord Enderby which Grace saw on many a lined and prison-worn face.

"Our secretary speaks truly," observed the president; "and we are sorry, young lady, to see in you so little sympathy for the sufferings of your noble father, and so much solicitude on behalf of one unworthy of your thoughts."

"Have not both a right to my sympathy?" said Grace, with earnest passion. "Both are suffering for rebellion against tyranny, but Lord Enderby is the braver, for he suffers for rebellion against the tyranny of terror—against your tyranny, which is the greatest and the cruellest the world has yet seen."

"We cannot hear such words, even from Valdivia's daughter," said the president, calmly by a gesture the murmurs that rose around him.

"We will hear no more!"

"Pardon me," cried Grace, "you must hear me!

"Let me remind you that, when I escaped this night from the durance in which I was kept, I might have gone to a police-court and denounced you.

"I might have succored Lord Enderby's child and restored him to his father; but I preferred to come to you and appeal to you in my father's name."

"You did well but your knowledge of our power must have told you that police-courts are useless against Nihilism.

"The child would have been in our hands again in two days, had we so willed it. Lord Enderby acknowledges this, and has not fought against us with weapons of war.

"He has proposed to us an exchange—himself for his child."

Grace grew a little pale; even her steadfast courage could not hear this and not shrink.

"May I know how you have answered him?" she asked, her voice faltering for the first time.

"We met to-night to consider his proposal," returned the president; "and we have not yet sent him our reply; but our decision is made.

"We refuse the exchange; it would give us no more than we now possess. He offers us his life—it is already forfeited to us; the sentence of death still stands against him—he cannot hasten or retard it by a single hour.

"He appears to think that while he is in England he is safe from the knife of the executioner; therefore he has left England he tells us, to place himself in a country where our power is unquestioned, and where one death more would make no stir. But he is mistaken; all kingdoms are alike to us; and this bragging, law-abiding country will yet behold her Ministers going to their office guarded by the police, they will see others assassinated, and the assassin—so called—free and unmolested. He imagines London to be a safe place. Has he forgotten the German who fled hither from our vengeance a year or two ago? He too was a traitor.

"He alighted from his train at Charing Cross and was seen to pass out into the

Strand; but he was never seen again, alive or dead, and he never will be. This is the substance of our answer to Lord Enderby. We do not require him to give up his life; it is ours already, to take when we please. And, as for his child, he is ours also. He will live, and will be brought up in misery, like the million, to toil and sweat for his bread, to drink gin for his recreation, and die in a prison or a work-house."

These terrible words elicited murmurs of applause from all but Lady Brentwyche, who sat silent, her fan still before her face, her eyes alone uncovered; and these had a watchfulness in which there lurked a dreadful terror.

"Your little prisoner," said Grace, "will escape your terrible vengeance. He will not be long in this word.

"For my father's sake, I implore you, let him die at home under his father's care, in his father's arms."

"Gentlemen," said the president, smiling "I put this to the vote. Do you accede to this request?"

"No—no—no!" cried every voice, in a sort of sullen indignation.

"The prisoners of Siberia are homeless, wifeless, childless," observed one pale iron-visaged man.

"It is just that this traitor should suffer in his affections as they do.

"Let his child die as the children of some of these have died—fatherless, destitute, unsuccored.

"Have we not known prisoners escape, and return to their hearths to find them desolate—wives murdered, and children dead of famine?

"With such memories as some of us have in our hearts, it is an insult to us to ask our pity for a coward and a traitor."

"You hear these words?" said the president.

"They represent the feelings of all here. These are men who have a right to speak; they have not lived softly, like Lord Enderby; they have endured hardship and suffered unutterable wrongs. We are grieved to refuse a prayer of Valdivia's daughter, but our laws must be carried out—they cannot be reversed for the sake of one, no matter how pitiful the case may be. I am but the interpreter of these laws; I cannot change them."

"Do you mean that I plead in vain?" cried Grace.

"You do indeed.

"We are but a handful of men here, representatives of a great and secret army; but we have no power to change the laws under which we organize our forces and sustain discipline and obedience. Our existance depends on our laws; to disobey them is to die."

"But it is only the life of a child for which I plead—a little wan creature so near death that even now he sees the faces of the angels who wait for him. And I do but pray that he may die at home. Oh, you are cruel—cruel indeed!"

"It is our misfortune that we have to work by crime to punish crimes. The child must suffer for the father.

"It seems cruel; but Nature, which is inexorable, holds the same law, and we make no outcry against it.

"Mademoiselle permit me to bid you good evening. We have urgent business on hand."

The president half rose half seated himself again as Grace flung herself upon her knees and caught his hand in both hers.

"Hear me," she cried—"only for a moment longer hear me!

"Lord Enderby has offered you his life for his child, but you refuse it because it is already forfeited, and you can take it when you will.

"Then now I offer you a life to which you have no right—a life young, strong, eager to work—a life which can earn great sums for you if you will take them.

"Accept this life, and give me the child in exchange."

"Of whom do you speak?" asked the president.

"Whose life do you imagine you have a right to dispose of thus?"

"My own!" cried Grace eagerly.

"I speak of myself. Lady Brentwyche I entreat you help me!

"Tell these men that mine is not a worthless offer.

"I have a gift which the world reckons at a great price. I sell you this; I sell you my whole life willingly, and I make but one condition."

Some of the men had smiled at her words; they took them to be the mere hysterical utterance of an excited girl; but the president was grave, so was Delgado, and Lady Brentwyche was earnest and eager.

"This offer is worth considering," she said, in a low voice, to the president. "I can give you many arguments in favor of its acceptance."

Grace heard her words and thanked her by a look.

The president rose, and, still holding her hand, he led her to the door.

"Leave us for a few minutes, mademoiselle; we can best discuss this matter without your presence. I promise you I will listen seriously to what Lady Brentwyche has to say."

The door was closed; and Grace found herself in the soft-carpeted corridor with the silent sentinel.

He pointed to a chair; she took it, and, covering her face with her hands, she prayed that the young life for which she was giving hers might be spared and her sacrifice not made in vain.

CHAPTER XXX.

"IT is not the mere romantic generous folly of a girl to which you have listened," said Lady Brentwyche.

"I believe that Grace di Valdivia would keep her compact, if you agreed to it. And I believe you would do wisely so to agree. The gift she possesses is the one to which the world pays its highest fees. She can be made the first singer in Europe. Reckon her worth then if you can. I conjure you to yield to her strange desire to rescue this boy, and put her earnings in your exchequer in the future.

"I am disinterested in this advice"—and out came her light laugh—"for the child's death would give me twenty thousand a year."

"Half of which, I think, you once said we would reckon on," observed the president coolly.

"I believe this would be the better speculation of the two, Lady Brentwyche."

She colored slightly, but answered without hesitation—

"I think differently, and, as I do not pretend to be generous, I shall confess that I intended to bring out Grace di Valdivia as a speculation of my own.

"So, if you accept her offer, you must make me some compensation. I mean you must let me a share in her success. I willingly give up the boy on those terms, and I will charge myself with the girl's musical education and culture."

"But what guarantee have we of her success—what guarantee that she would pay us say, even a stated portion of her salary as a singer?" asked the president.

"I will guarantee her success. And, for the rest, what guarantee have you that any of us here will keep our oaths and our compact?

"Apparently each one is free to go forth and do what he will with his life, and yet you know that the chains which bind us are so strong that if, from this obscure place where we sit, a message was flashed to the other end of the world, the person receiving it would obey or die.

"Then how can you suppose that a weak girl—full of generous romance as she is—would ever dare to break any compact by which you bound her? No; you will find her obedient even unto death."

Lady Brentwyche had spoken with a slight flush on her fair white face.

She sat down now amid murmurs of assent on every side.

Delgado rose gracefully, saying in his soft way—

"I will be surety for mademoiselle di Valdivia.

"I will answer for her keeping any agreement into which she may enter with us. And, to make assurance doubly sure, I would suggest that at a fitting time her hand should be given in marriage to a member of our society."

In the gleam of his soft, velvety, brown eyes, in the brightened color of cheeks moulded like Apollo's, an observer might have noted the signs of Delgado's eager but suppressed passion.

No one saw this except Lady Brentwyche; she watched him uneasily, her fan, as usual, half hiding her face.

"Yours is a good suggestion, Delgado," said the president; "it shall be considered at a future day.

"If the young lady proves a fortune to our needy exchequer, we should take due precaution not to lose her to an unfitting husband."

Lady Brentwyche smiled, and dropped her fan suddenly.

"Then you agree to her terms?" she said quickly.

"Shall I recall her?"

"No. If you all agreed to accept this rashly generous, strange proposal, I should give my vote against it," said the president. "Grazia di Valdivia owes obedience to her father.

"If she forgets him, we do not. She has no right to dispose of her life without his consent; she is too young. What is Lord Enderby's child to her?"

Lady Brentwyche smiled again, and drew a letter from her bosom.

"I have her father's consent—here—in his own hand—given to me by himself."

The president took the letter, read it, and handed it back to her.

"We have not forgotten your brave journey, Lady Brentwyche, and the generous risk you ran.

"I would do much to oblige you; but I think this is beyond my power. Valdivia's letter gives his daughter into your charge not ours.

"Besides, the end our society has in view is the punishment of the traitor; we cannot forego this at the entreaty of a girl."

"President, you force my last card," said Lady Brentwyche, in her prettiest, softest way.

"Let me ask you a question. Has a threat been sent to Lord Enderby that, if he marries again his second wife will meet with the fate that befell the first one?"

"He has received an intimation to that effect," returned the president. "We will not permit him to marry while his victims perish daily."

"Then, if you reject Grace di Valdivia's petition, you sign her death-warrant," said Lady Brentwyche.

There was a movement of surprise; all eyes were fixed on her face; Delgado's were filled with a fire that betrayed a burning jealousy.

"Do you mean," began the president.

"I mean," she answered, interrupting him "that Lord Enderby is so much in love that he disregards your threat.

"He flatters himself with thoughts of safety.

"He believes you will not dare to carry out your menaces in England as you have done in Ireland.

"In a word, love blinds him to his true position, and he intends to marry Grazia di Valdivia."

"He never shall!" exclaimed Delgado, rising in a wrath of jealousy which made his beauty fiercely resplendent.

"Such a marriage would be impious! Have we all forgotten that it fell to her father's lot to be the executioner of our sentence against this man? And, should he ever escape from his terrible prison, that lot would still be his to fulfil."

"True," said the president, with hand upon his chin and eyes darkening with gloomy though.

"Destiny plays us strange tricks at times. Can it be possible that Grazia di Valdivia loves this man, who lives from day to day only by mercy of a suspended sentence?"

"Surely not!" returned Delgado. "Let us say the love in on his side, not hers."

"The facts speak for themselves," said Lady Brentwyche coldly.

"There is a mutual strong affection between these two, and the terrible circumstances which link both their lives ought to keep them asunder; their love therefore must necessarily be a misfortune. It is my duty—a duty delegated to me by her father—to save Grace, if possible, from a sad destiny."

"The opportunity to do this lies in accepting the offer she had just made to us. Mr. President, I entreat you earnestly to reflect before you refuse it.

"The earnings of this young girl whom you are half inclined to despise will place ten thousand a year at the disposal of our society.

"I am speaking far within bounds in naming that sum, but I name it because you will look on it as an equivalent for a supposed lost.

"Excuse me—I know what you are about to say, but I affirm that one amount is not less certain than the other.

"Money is always welcome; funds are greatly needed for the vast machinery which our society works, and which girdles the world.

"You have a treasure in your hands now. Will you refuse it because it is thrust upon you by the romantic generosity of a girl? Believe me, if you do so, you will bitterly repent of your short-sightedness. One word more, Mr. President—it is a sacred duty thrown on our hands to snatch Valdivia's daughter from death, to save her from being that sad victim. Lord Enderby's wife. In her own proposal to us stands the loop-hole of her escape; let her take it, and enrich yourselves for years to come."

"You speak well, Lady Brentwyche," said the president.

"We ought to save this girl—Valdivia's daughter has a claim on us; we cannot allow her to marry Lord Enderby. And, if by yielding to her prayer we not only snatch her from a great evil, but do ourselves most than I think the matter should be considered and put to a vote."

"There is no time for consideration," interposed Delgado eagerly. "We must decide now—at once."

Apparently he had placed himself on Lady Brentwyche's side; secretly he had his own plans, but the time was not ripe for those, and he could do no other now than give the Countess his help.

"You have only to hear one song from this girl's lips, and it will not cost you another moment to come to a "decision," said Lady Brentwyche, returning to her light laugh and her light way, for she saw she had conquered.

For good or for evil, money is the great lever that moves the world—the one sole thing that has a general language and "speaks with every tongue to every purpose."

Greed had gained the day.

The words the president took such pains to use were but mere strivings to make an ugly deed look fair.

He caught now at Lady Brentwyche's suggestion as a means by which to make his own consent a general one.

If Grace could rouse their enthusiasm, they would grant her prayer, and under the guise of pity, mask their own covetousness to their own hearts.

"Your idea is good, Countess. Let us hear the voice you praise so much. The young lady will not refuse to let us judge for ourselves whether or not she possesses a gift likely to prove as valuable as she asserts."

Lady Brentwyche rose instantly; so did Delgado; and, as he set the curtain aside and opened the door for her to pass out, she met his eyes with a glance of warning.

He felt now that he had been betraying himself; his sudden love for Grace had shaken his self-control and surprised him into an unusual imprudence.

It behoved him to be more wary and to suppress the feelings which were beating wildly in every pulse.

Some of the men smiled when he took his seat again, and one or two spoke a few words in a low voice, showing his secret was divined.

"A good speculation for him; Nothing pays like singing. He must cultivate his own voice.

"A *prima donna* always drags her husband into the first parts.

"Oh, hang it, his lameness would bar that project! Audiences would not stand a crippled Faust."

These were some of the murmured utterances that reached Delgado's ear, hurting his intense vanity and inflaming his hatred against the man who lamed him.

Meanwhile Lady Brentwyche was bending over Grace with caresses and honeyed words.

"They are on the point of yielding; but it has been hard work to gain so much. You believe I have done my best?"

"I believe you have tried to move them," said Grace, "but not because you care for the child—not because you heed Lord Enderby's grief; you have other reasons. I do not know them; but I accept your help gladly."

"You have grown suspicious," returned Lady Brentwyche.

"You hate me because Lord Enderby does; he is always unjust to me. Try to judge me yourself, Grace—try to think of me as a friend.

"I am saving you now from a fate that you would abhor.

"Tell me, if it were proposed to you to rescue little Alan at the cost of giving your hand to one of these men, would you do it?"

Grace looked up amazed; her face was white and resolute.

"No," she answred firmly; that would be impossible."

Lady Brentwyche smiled at this quick answer.

She had lived to see many things come to pass that, as a girl, she had deemed impossible.

"Remember always," she said, "that I am your safeguard against such a proposal being eventually made to you.

"It will not be done now—I am the barrier preventing it.

"Do not forget that if I ask a sacrifice of you."

Grace half trusted her as she said this, half held out her hand; but the instincts of her pure nature were stronger than her reason; and again she shrank from the kiss and the caress offered her.

Lady Brentwyche drew back, as if grieved.

"I am telling you an ugly truth"—and she glanced at the sentinel to mark if he was out of hearing.

"One of these men is madly in love with you, and you will have to choose whether you will trust him or me."

"I should trust you," Grace answered, saying it simply," not in preference, but as a necessity.

"Then I look to that as settled. And you are prepared to make a sacrifice?"

"I am prepared. Have I not told them what I will do?"

"Yes, and it is a great sacrifice—they are making a good purchase.

"You are selling yourself, Grace for a small price."

"I do not reckon it small," said Grace quietly.

"They do not believe in your voice," resumed Lady Brentwyche, speaking hurriedly—as the man on guard drew near. "They want you to sing to them."

"I am ready;" and Grace turned towards the curtained door.

"Oh, not there! It would cause remark. We must go to the drawing-room and join the company."

"Oh, come then!" cried Grace.

"Come quickly! You have been so long, and it grows late.

"Through all these slow minutes of weary waiting little Alan's cry has been in my ears, sadly breaking my heart with pain."

She descended the stairs a few steps, and looked back imploringly, as Lady Brentwyche went swiftly to the Committee-room and arranged that three or four of the men should follow her and appear as guests in the drawing-room.

A few moments more, and Lady Brentwyche, all smiles, and as full of beauty as a freshly-opened rose, was greeting many friends and uttering pretty commonplace speeches, as if the world was as fair and smooth as it seemed to be, and there were no such things as dynamite and daggers, and secret hands desperately bold, ready to wield them in marvellous impunity, laughing at law.

"How late you are!" said Madame Delgado.

"I expected you an hour ago. But there—you have so many engagements."

"I have been here half an hour," returned the Countess; "but I met Mademoiselle di Valdivia on the stairs, and I could not resist the temptation to have a quiet talk with her; so we have positively been sitting in your private boudoir, Madame Delgado, all to ourselves, in the most selfish way. However, I have purchased your forgiveness beforehand, for I have persuaded Grazia to sing for you."

"No! Is it possible? That's very good of you.

"We shall all be delighted, I am certain; for I remember she used to sing like a little angel."

A group of gentlemen here entered the room together; and Madame Delgado ran over to them, with her big baby-face expanded with smiles.

"I am so pleased to see you, Count—and you too! Ah, and here's Pietro at last! Is it not shabby of him, Countess? Whenever I have a reception, there is sure to be some tiresome business on hand that keeps him away till midnight. Such a good son-in-law! Only he won't dance—there, that's his only fault."

This was an unlucky speech, for it brought notice on his lameness; and Delgado turned his handsome face.

As for the others, Grace regarded them in bewildered surprise.

Could these gracious, suave, smiling men be the same with whom she had pleaded but for a few minutes before for a young life which they were destroying ruthlessly for a deliberate purpose, which they did not count a crime?

They were paying compliments and talking now with as smiling a mien as the gay smiling world around them—the world which feasted and laughed and danced while the earth was undermined beneath their careless feet.

"What are you going to sing?" asked Delgado, approaching Grace, as she stood by the piano.

"I cannot tell what they would like," she said, looking up from the music she held, and letting her calm innocent eyes rest a moment on his, bringing to his heart a rush of strong delight that made his hands tremble as he took the portfolio from hers.

Ever watchful and keen Lady Brentwyche had followed Delgado; and she now bent over the book and turned the pages rapidly.

"Sing this," she said to Grace, "and I will play it for you."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Very Much Sold.

BY P. C. BERRETTA.

"IS this seat occupied, sir?"

The person addressed, without lowering the newspaper which obscured his features, put out his hand and removed a satchel from the vacant cushion to his knee.

"Thanks," said Fred Wilson, sinking into the seat, with a sigh of relief.

The train was crowded.

Even this, the smoking-carriage, full to overflowing, and he was devoted to his weed.

Then after a moment—

"Have a cigar?"

The paper crackled.

"I have one," came in brief response from behind its folds, and the lighted tip was thrust into view.

"And a capital one it is, too," said Wilson, sniffing the air like a connoisseur.

"Very wise of you to decline my offer. We've been doing a beastly little place called Irvington these last three days, that hadn't a decent cigar in it."

The top of a Derby hat came in view, an eye glanced over the paper and took Mr. Wilson in.

Then a cigar case was extended with a sententious—

"Have one?"

"Don't care if I do.

"Ah, that's something like!

"Can I trouble you for a light?"

Why men will prefer this request with a full matchbox in their pockets is one of the mysteries.

His companion had evidently lost himself in the literature of the day again, for there was no response, while Wilson calmly waited for him to reach the end of his paragraph, some words passing between the guard and a brakesman, who were standing at the door, came fragmentarily to his ear.

"On this very train, he thinks.

"Woman—in disguise—look sharp."

"What's up, Jack?" Wilson queried, half turning in his seat to address the guard.

"Got a detective aboard.

"Secret case, but big game.

"Will tell you presently."

And off went the busy official to attend to his duties.

"Don't believe in any sensations that aren't in the morning papers," remarked Wilson.

"By the way, you haven't got a hint of this mysterious affair—whatever it may be—there, have you?" appealing to his companion.

"I can give you something more than a hint, the true facts of the case.

"I believe I am the party that detective is looking for."

For the first time the paper was withdrawn, and the full face of his companion turned towards Wilson.

A very handsome, boyish face, the latter thought; but after an instant's gaze into the appealing eyes, a hot tingle flashed over him.

His own eyes sunk down from the Derby hat, down the closely-buttoned ulster of grey cloth, either of which was masculine enough to have justified the mistake he had made down to a mere line of black skirt showing beneath its hem.

"I—I beg your pardon.

"I had no idea——"

"Oh, pray don't add to my distress.

"The greatest kindness you could do me was to make that mistake.

"I made a mistake myself when I got into this carriage.

"I was afraid of being followed, and it flashed over me I might be safer here, and the accident of having my brother's cigar-case in my pocket did the rest."

While she was making this hurried explanation, Fred Wilson regained some of his usual coolness.

He remembered that this rather bewildering young lady was probably, by her own admission, a criminal under the law.

"Oh, please don't steel your heart against me," she pleaded, reading his thoughts. "It rests with you to save me if you will. No one in this car has seen my face except yourself.

"I know you; you are an actor, and have some of your properties in that portmanteau, I am sure.

"Give me something—a wig or beard—to change my looks, and help me to carry out my masculine role."

"But—you forget—I don't know how far I may be compromising myself," blurted out Wilson, and next instant was ready to sink in confusion before the indignant and sorrowful look which flashed from her eyes.

"If it can compromise you to befriend one so utterly helpless as myself, I have certainly mistaken the man to whom I am speaking," she returned coldly.

Fred gulped down a hasty resolution.

"See here," he said doggedly, "I'll do it.

"I don't care what they accuse you of, I can't go back on a lady in distress.

"But I'd feel better if you'd tell me once that you are—are innocent, you know."

A little cloud dimmed the grateful face.

"Is it such a crime then to have run away from a home in which I was persecuted and most unhappy?

"I am guilty of that act, and I would do it again.

"You see, I aim at being an actress myself.

"It is that fact which has scandalized my relatives and caused them to send this detective on my tracks."

"And you mean to say that is all?" cried Fred, with a sense of the greatest relief rolling over him.

"I'm afraid you'll have to permit me," and the next instant, behind the folds of the screening paper, he fastened a pair of fierce black moustaches upon the blushing face.

It was time.

The guard came back at that moment.

"How are you, Mr. Wilson?

"Did you do a good business down there in Irvington?

"Ah! did I take your ticket, sir?"

"Yes, sir, to Pittsburg," and Fred was amused at the baritone effect which the soft voice had assumed.

"This detective we have here has an affair in your line," continued the guard, addressing the young actor.

"Madame Leblanc's diamonds were stolen as she came out of the theatre last night.

"It's an open secret that will be in all the papers before the day is over.

"Hubbuck is about convinced that he started on the wrong track.

"He's spotted a black woman and a veiled one back there.

"You see, they have put the theft on Billy Dalmaine, who excels in his make-up as a woman."

"I'd like to bet with you that the diamonds weren't stolen at all," cried Wilson in a tone of conviction.

"Do you suppose Leblanc is silly enough to sport anything except paste upon the stage?

"I've played with her and know better.

"It's an advertising dodge, a la Modjeska."

"Hubbuck as good as told me that himself," laughed the guard, "but the effect of their restoration will be just the same."

He passed on, and Wilson stole a sly glance at his companion.

She met it with one frank and merry.

"What a ridiculous mistake!

"My brother employed that Mr. Hubbuck once, and I supposed when I saw him come into the station that of course he was following me.

"Don't you think I have the nerve to become an actress?"

"You are a capital one already.

"You never changed countenance while the guard stood here."

"Because you gave me such excellent support," she said, blushing again.

"Saw Mill Run," called the guard, and the young lady grew nervous as she realized that their journey was nearly at an end.

"I have placed myself in a very awkward position," she explained.

"Before I donned this moustache no one noticed me, but I have met a dozen pairs of eyes since.

"Ah, there is our detective now; he has evidently abandoned his game.

"Do me one more favor!

"Say good-bye, and engage his attention for a minute or two, until I affect a metamorphose and retire to the ladies' car."

"I'll engage to do the latter on condition that the good-bye is deferred until we reach the station," he replied.

Mr. Hubbuck was in a surly humor, and gave the theatrical gentleman who knew so much about his mission very gruff replies.

"Like those railroad fellows not to hold their tongues," he grumbled.

"All you theatre men have got hold of it.

"That was another of them back there with you, I suppose?

"He has dropped a moustache, I observe."

"I'll take charge of it," said Almond, as the detective stooped to pick the tell-tale article from the floor.

"Hallos, what place is this?

"Point Bridge?

"The train doesn't stop here, does it?"

It was only slowing as demanded within the city limits.

A few minutes later Fred Wilson stood on the platform of South Side Station, eagerly watching the alighting passengers, but nowhere in the crowd could he find the black Derby and the grey ulster of his late companion.

"Pretty good joke," said the guard, overtaking him, as he walked disconsolately towards his hotel.

"Billy Dalmaine jumped from the train at Point Bridge in all his feminine toggery.

"Hubbock is furious.

"He says we all combined to make a laughing-stock of him."

A dreadful suspicion shot across Fred, leaving him hot and cold by turns.

It was verified when he had occasion to open his portmanteau later.

The contents were strange, but unmistakably masculine—a pack of cards, a case bottle, and at the very bottom a jewel-case, which Wilson recognized at once as Madame Leblanc's property.

His own gold-stoppered toilet bottles—the gift of an admiring public—and ivory brushes, and letters from his latest conquest had gone out of his sight for ever.

Later, the anxious public were gratified by the announcement that Madame Leblanc's famous diamonds had been restored; but Wilson smiles sardonically when he sees any notice of their glitter behind the footlights.

It is not given to all the world to know which is paste.

KANGAROO SHOOTING.

A HUNTER in Queensland, Australia, writes as follows:—

Now we are all in our places, some hidden behind bushes, others ensconced behind an artificial gunnery.

Lying down, peeping through the leaves, the plain, far, far away, seems to begin to undulate.

It is a mob of kangaroos that causes this appearance.

As they draw nearer they remind you of a band of porpoises at play. Ostrich-like, instinctively one crouches lower. Close to the ground you hear a "thud," "thud," "thud," with two or three seconds interval between the sound of each jump. Now it stops for the "old man kangaroo" has an unpleasant if not a tingling recollection of this sport last year.

But the guns are down wind and well hidden. "Thud," "thud," again, nearer and clearer, and now you catch sight of the mob; he is close to you. You rise and pour into his hind quarters—for, unlike all other game, it is more deadly to shoot them well behind—three and one-quarter drams of powder, one and one-eight ounces of shot. Down he goes with a heavy flop and grunt. Ping goes the other barrel. Oh, for a loader! You have just time to stuff another cartridge into the right-hand barrel and send it after the last of the mob.

Your neighors, too—who in all likelihood "know the sound full well," and have been watching the advance with perhaps less excitable but not less keen interest than you—have also arisen and discharged a volley. Down you sink again behind your shelter, and the silence is only broken by the expiring grunt and fickle kick of "old man," who dies so hard.

This is the first mob. Stillness now for 10 minutes or so reigns, unless broken by an occasional rustle in the grass.

You get up and see a wallaby, with head down, going full lick through the grass; he presents to you a shot just like a rabbit in covert.

And now every three or four minutes you hear the "distant and random gun" of your fellow-sportsman; for the marsupials are coming well.

You detect the sound of the stock-whip Another volley. What unearthly sound is it that you hear now? Is it human? Darwinians might say "no." But you, on looking, see what at first sight you might take for Pandemonium let loose, for, screeching, yelling, whooping, grunting like pigs, come the negros, King Billy resplendently red and goldly gleaming, in the midst. Sitting upon their horses' necks like monkeys on a tree, waving their handkerchiefs and cracking their stock-whips, one is not surprised that it requires a great orator to make the colonial whites believe that these are really friends and brothers.

The manager, assisted by a few stockmen, keeps them in excellent order. The sport now becomes fast and furious. Volley-firing has commenced, and the distracted marsupial is having a rough time of it. Work as you may, although your cartridges do not stick, you cannot load fast enough. At length the drive is over. You take out a knife, and going to the spot where you hear the kicking, you administer the finishing stroke.

Sometimes a kangaroo with broken leg will "bale up" and look like fight. But there are plenty of stones about, so heave "arf a brick" at him, or hit him behind the ear with a good thick stick and he is soon finished.

Now the guns come up congratulating each other upon the success of the drive, varied by the usual interchange of conversation where a lot of strange guns shoot together—"I say! your shot came precious near my head."

But on the whole, at this drive, and at all the other drives we had afterwards, I only heard of one of the party getting very slightly peppered.

The perpetrator was voted a dangerous shot, although it was universally admitted he never shot any one else again; indeed, for my part I do not think he had another chance, for I noticed that every gun during the week that was placed within a quarter of a mile from him took good care to let a big tree intervene between him and them. Thus, the Australians have as wholesome a dread of being peppered as anyone though in other things they have a comparative disregard for life.

THE MAELSTROM.—The most remarkable whirlpool is the maelstrom, or mill-stream, off the northwest coast of Norway and southwest of Moskenesoi the most southerly of the Lofoden Isles. It was once supposed to be unfathomable, but the depth has been shown not to exceed twenty fathoms. The whirlpool is navigable under ordinary circumstances; but when the wind is northwest it often attains great fury and becomes extremely dangerous. Under strong gales the maelstrom has been shown by statistics to run at the rate of twenty-six miles an hour.

HYDRA-HEADED MULTITUDE.—This term is applied to the people speaking of men as the mob, the vulgar herd. The origin is this: the hydra was a fabulous monster, having many heads, variously stated by different authors as nine, fifty and a hundred. As soon as one of these heads was cut off, two immediately grew in its place.

Bric-a-Brac.

A PAIR OF FINCHES.—In Anecdotes of Birds the authoress supplies a characteristic instance of the clever way in which a pair of goldfinches foresaw and provided against an emergency. The little couple had built their nest on the small branch of an olive tree, and after hatching their brood, found that their family dwelling was growing too heavy for the bough whereon it rested. They were watched, and seen to fasten the bending branch to a higher and stronger one with a piece of string they had somewhere obtained! By this contrivance their little home was completely secured.

TWO DRAWBACKS.—George Robins, whose artistically written advertisements in London journals forty or fifty years ago have not been surpassed by latter puffs, once described one portion of a "paradise" he was about to submit to public competition as being adorned, among other charms, with a "hanging wood." The astonished purchaser found out that this meant nothing more than an old gallows. On one occasion Robins closed his description of an enchanting estate with this remark: "But there are two drawbacks to the property—the litter of the roseleaves and the noise of the nightingales!"

BIRD-CAGE WALK.—Everybody has heard of Bird-Cage Walk in St. James' Park, London. It takes its name from the Aviary, believed to have been the first in England, formed by Charles II, who loved to loaf about there with his dogs at his heels and feed his pet birds. Their keeper was called the Avener, and some old account books show the payments for bird seed. Charles also created an officer called "the Cockle Strewer," whose business it was to see to the proper pounding of cockle shells (cockles are a sort of clam) to create a smooth, hard surface on the mall where pall mall was played. In that game a large ball being struck by a heavy bat had to be sent through an iron ring on a high pole.

ALLITERATIVE TITLES.—Alliteration is still a favorite device for securing an attractive and harmonious title; but our literary ancestors seem to have revelled in its delights, scattering their 'similar sounds' with a liberal hand. Take the following: 'Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soul for Sin; or the Seven Penitential Psalms of the Princely Prophet David, whereunto are also annexd William Humuls's Handful of Honeysuckles, and divers Godly and pithy Ditties now newly augmented;' 'A Plante of Pleasure and Grove of Graces;' 'A Delicate Diet for Daintie Drunkards' (1576); 'Diet's Dry Dinner' (1599); and the famous little seventeenth-century bit of historical satire, 'The Staggering State of Scots Statesmen, by Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet.'

NOT THE COOK.—Brillat Savarin tells a story illustrative of the estimation in which cooks were held by the good livers of the past. An Italian Prince who had a Sicilian cook (the cooks of Sicily have been famous from time immemorial), was once traveling to his provincial estates, taking with him said cook, together with his entire kitchen household. At a turned angle of a projecting rock, the Prince, at the head of his long cavalcade, heard a shriek and the splash of a body falling into the torrent far below. With a face white with horror he pulled up, and, looking back, exclaimed, "The cook! the cook! Merciful heavens, it is the cook!" "No, your excellency," cried a voice from the rear, "It is Don Prosdocemo." The Prince heaved a sigh of intense relief, then said, "Ah! only the chaplain! Heaven be thanked!"

TABLE MANNERS.—Some people eat instinctively with great elegance; some never achieve elegance in these minor matters, but all should strive for it. There is no more repulsive object than a person who eats noisily, grossly, inelegantly. Dr. Johnson is remembered for his brutal way of eating almost as much as for his great learning and genius. With him it was selfish preoccupation. Fish and fruit are eaten with silver knives and forks; or if silver fish knives are not provided, a piece of bread can be held in the left hand. Fish corrodes a steel knife. Never tilt a soup-plate for the last drop, or ostentatiously scrape your plate clean. A part of table manners should be the conversation. By mutual constant, everyone should bring only the best there is in him to the table. There should be the greatest care taken in the family circle to talk of only agreeable topics at meals.

LOVE LETTERS.—Rousseau gives a rule for their composition, which would make it appear a matter of the utmost ease. "Begin without knowing what you are going to say," advises he, "and end without knowing what you have said." That may be all very well, and there are some who, no doubt have been able to do it. The theological John Knox probably acted on the first part of the maxim. His first love letter was a composition that it is difficult to imagine any man could have deliberately premeditated. It was enormously long, reads for the most part like a very dull sermon, and its first sentence—addressed to his "Delrilbelovit sister"—when afterward printed made eighteen lines of close type. The ordinary billet-doux, however, is a serious affair whether ponderously spun out in long-winded periods like Knox's or concentrated and condensed like Steele's, the love letters has probably always been the occasion of a vast amount of brain cudgelling. "Dear Mistress Scurlock," wrote Steele, "I am tired of calling you by that name; therefore say a day when you will take that of, madame, your devoted, humble servant, Richard Steele."

ROSE AND SKY.

BY BILY CARROLL.

A rose looked up at the summer sky.
And she said, "You are blue and bright,
But you're often dimmed by the murky clouds,
And veiled by the gloomy night."

The rose looked up at the shining stars,
And she said, "You are fair to see,
But your luster pales at the brighter beams
Of the sun's great majesty."

"But I," she said, "not a cloud can pass
O'er my lovely, blushing face,
And no fairer flower in the garden grows
As a rival to my grace."

A passing hand plucked the taunting rose,
And before the day was o'er,
She was cast away as a worthless thing,
That could bloom and please no more.

But the summer skies and the shining stars,
They are still the same to-day,
And they live unchanged while the ages roll—
But the roses pass away.

THE BROKEN RING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "WEAKER THAN A WOMAN," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LI.

LEAH had reached the end of the letter, but her senses were confused.

Her brain was dazed; she could not think or realise her position.

Her whole soul was steeped in the horror of dull despair.

Slowly she again turned to the letter and re-read it line by line, word by word.

The firelight, with its red flickering flame, fell on the white pages as she did so, and on the desolate face of Œnone.

It was her sentence of death; it was the warrant that cut her off from all that was bright and beautiful in life.

The two whom she had loved and trusted had betrayed her.

Granted that Basil's betrayal had been unconscious, that he had fallen in love without knowing it, he should have told her.

He should have trusted her, and let her decide.

"I should have given him his freedom," she said, with a great tearless sob.

"I should have set him free."

And Hettie, the fair young sister whom she had nursed back from the arms of death?

Ah, well, she could not say that Hettie had betrayed her, for she had learned to love him without the faintest suspicion as to who he was; but when she saw him here, when she knew that it was Leah's lover for whom she had learned to care, she might surely have trusted her then!

Lover and sister had betrayed her; lover and sister were both untrue to her.

Her head drooped; the fire-flame died; the desolate face of Œnone faded.

It seemed to Leah as though her soul was leaving her body; a cold chill and a sense of darkness came over her.

"If it be death, welcome, death!" she said, as the shadows closed around her.

* * * * * *

It was not death that came to Leah Hatton, only a merciful insensibility.

She woke to find all her nerves tingling with pain, to find the crushed pages of her father's letter in her hand, the firelight shining on her, and the face in the picture looking down upon her in its calm, grand despair.

She woke with a pain worse than the thrust of a sharp dagger, with a low moan on her lips.

A faint glimpse of hope came to her.

The story might not be true.

Her father did not like her, and he had perhaps taken this method of punishing her.

The very hope, faint as it was, seemed to gladden her and startle her into sudden brightness.

The story might not be true.

Let her think, let her go back in mind to the past, and see if anything in it bore out or contradicted it.

She thought of Dene Abbey first, and she remembered the great green hill that rose between the estate and the town of Southwood.

It was on the other side of the hill that her father and sister had lived.

She could not find that the faintest notion of their being near her had ever dawned upon her.

No one had spoken in her presence of a worn-out political agitator who had come to Southwood to rest and die.

But she remembered that Sir Basil had been very strange when at Dene.

She thought of the long rambles, when, without seeming reason, he had left her alone.

They had puzzled her at the time; she understood them now.

He had spent those hours at the cottage with Hettie or with Martin Ray.

She remembered his abstraction, his gloom, and her anxiety about him.

Her father's narrative was true!

She thought of the sad little story that Hettie had told her.

It was all of a piece; there was not one word that differed.

Hettie had told her what the stranger had said—that he was compelled in honor to marry the girl to whom he was pledged, but that he did not love her as he loved Hettie.

Her father told her the same thing.

Then she remembered the morning of Basil's return to Brentwood.

He must have seen Hettie before he entered the house.

How blind and stupid she had been not to have understood it before!

It was the sight of him that had caused Hettie's illness—nothing else.

She could have slain herself for her blindness, for her credulity.

Had they laughed at her, these lovers—at her, the dupe who had been left in ignorance?

If they had laughed at her, no matter what it cost, she would be revenged.

Every drop of blood in her veins burned at the thought; a hot flush scorched her face.

Would they dare to ridicule her?

The thought was horrible.

Yet, when reason came to her, she knew that it had not been so.

There had been no derision; it had been a tragedy of pain.

She wondered more than ever how it was she had not seen it.

It was that, of course, which had thrown Basil into a state of suspense and anxious gloom.

She remembered also with a start that she had heard Hettie say, "I cannot bear it," and she had seen Basil draw back as though he had been consoling her.

Believing them to be strangers, she had laughed at it as fancy.

Now she knew that on one occasion her ears had not deceived her.

"It is true," she said, "every word written here by my father.

"Whether written in hate or in love, it is perfectly true."

She repeated the words to herself to impress them on her brain.

Yet her reason and her brain refused to believe them.

She had entered that room an hour before happy, loving, and full of hope; she sat there now in despair.

"How shall I bear it?" came from her lips—a shuddering cry that she could not repress.

"Through all the long years of my life, how shall I bear it?"

It seemed to her as though her brain were reeling.

Strange words rang through it, strange sounds came to her, and a voice deeper and sweeter than any she had known sang:

"Sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go."

There would be no sweet release of death for her.

She would have to suffer through the long years alone.

The firelight played on the beautiful face of Œnone, whose sorrows she had sympathized with only yesterday.

Now a whole age seemed to part her from that time.

She tried to rise from the chair that she had drawn near the picture, but there was no strength in her limbs.

She could not stand; she must wait until the first shock of her pain had passed.

It seemed to her as though Œnone were living, and were the only one who understood her trouble.

Great Heaven, how hard it was to bear!

So, through all this time Basil had never loved her!

Why had he asked her to marry him?

He had probably mistaken fancy for love, and only when he met Hettie knew what love was.

She (Leah) had worshipped him; she had made no secret of it; she had told him often, with kisses and tears, that life held nothing for her but his love.

Oh, bitter sorrow, bitter shame!

He had kissed her, caressed her, listened to her loving words, spoken to her of the future they should pass together.

He had prepared his home to be her home; he had given her a wedding-ring; he had discussed his future with her; she had thought of herself as his wife!

He had allowed her to tell him the deepest secrets of her heart, to make her life one with his; he had led her to believe in his truth and his affection—and all the time he had no love for herself!

Hettie had won him—Hettie, with her fair face and wealth of golden hair, Hettie, whom years ago she had forsaken!

It was Hettie whom he had loved, and not herself!

"I will judge him myself," she said; and then slowly in her own mind she went over the past, beginning with the first hour that she had met him and ending with the previous evening, when he had parted from her with a pale, worn face, as though life had little brightness for him.

Not even one circumstance escaped her memory.

She recalled the little incident at the Royal Academy, when, referring to the face that she had thought like Hettie's, he had said:

"It has the tenderness that yours lacks."

Time went by unheeded.

She forgot everything in the world but the task she had set herself; and each fact, each memory as it came home to her, brought with it confirmation of the truth.

At last, with white, tearless face and clenched hands, she fell upon her knees with a bitter cry.

"It is all true," she moaned; "every word is true!"

She buried her face in her hands—her love was slain, and she was weeping over its grave!

"How could he do it? How could he do it?"—that was the burden of her cry.

Oh, sweet kisses that had been turned to poison on her lips!

Oh, kindly loving words that stung her now with unutterable pain!

How could she say "Good-bye?"

How could she look for the last time on the face that was as the sun in the heavens to her?

How could she listen for the last time to the voice that held the sweetest music on earth to her?

"Oh, my love, my love!" cried the girl, with great bitter sobs that shook her whole frame.

Œnone's words came back to her:

"Wherever I am, by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

Burning fire appeared to surround her, fire that she drew in with her breath.

Kneeling still, she remembered how, years before, she had asked in her impatience of despair, to be delivered from a furnace of fire."

Her prayer had been granted; but it would have been better never thus to have prayed.

This was the curse.

She had thought to escape it.

Her father, in the very act of freeing her from it, as he thought, had confirmed it.

She could see it so clearly.

Hettie had been sacrificed before; it was her turn now.

She had said to herself that, if ever the opportunity were given her of making a heroic sacrifice she could do it.

The time was come, and she was shrinking with body and soul from the ordeal.

Whether she could escape it or not it was there, and she could not escape it.

What could she do?

If she had dared, she would have killed herself; but she dared not.

She must live on; yet the pain was so terrible that she could hardly bear it.

What should she do?

She laid her desolate head upon the soft velvet of the chair that was near her.

Only a short time since she was one of the most brilliant, most popular women in England, envied, beloved, admired: now she felt herself to be one of the most desolate, for the one hope she had in the world lay shattered at her feet.

How long she knelt in the glow of the firelight she never knew; but it was the sound of the dressing-bell that at length aroused her.

She stood up then, with a scared look on her face.

"I must live through it!" she said.

"I must meet my uncle, and smile as though nothing were wrong.

"I must dress, talk, meet him who was my lover.

"I must go to see Hettie, with this sharp bitter pain at my heart."

CHAPTER LII.

A MONTH had elapsed since the fatal day on which Leah had read her father's letter.

She had made up her mind now how to act.

The doctors had agreed that Hettie would not recover until she had change of air, and it was arranged that, when the first breath of warm weather came, the family were to go to the south of France.

The Duke and Duchess of Rosedene were already settled there, so there would be a "home party" after all.

There had been some mention of the wedding.

Leah's beautiful face had paled, and a wistful look had come into her eyes.

She said that the wedding must be delayed; there could be no thought of marriage when Hettie was in such a fragile state of health.

She spoke calmly, and smiled when she remembered how little anyone knew of the pain at her heart.

The General had demurred slightly when she refused to hear of the marriage taking place, as had been settled in the spring.

"Delayed marriages are always unlucky, Leah," he said to her.

"Mine will not be so," she replied; and he wondered at the strange smile on her face.

He had thought a great deal lately about his favorite niece; she was so terribly changed.

He tried to believe that it was due to her anxiety concerning Hettie; but that was hardly possible.

She had such a strange expression on her face.

He could not understand it, though he watched her keenly.

One thing in particular struck him.

She never spoke of the future, and her interest in everything seemed dead.

She laughed and talked; but, to his eyes, there was always more or less of effort when she did so.

Her face would flush, and the light in her eyes was too bright.

Hettie noticed nothing; her one great relief and source of gratitude was that she would not have to go through the trial of seeing Sir Basil again.

The doctor had said that she must go to Mentone as soon as possible, and that in the meantime she must be kept perfectly free from all excitement and must see no one.

Leah, knowing the truth now, never spoke of Sir Basil to her.

If Hettie had been stronger, she must have noticed the reticence; as it was she did not, and the Baronet's name was never mentioned between them.

Leah went through what seemed to her the most terrible kind of pain.

She received Sir Basil in nearly the old fashion, and was always cheerful, and ready to talk with him on any topic.

The only difference was that she never went near him, never touched his hand, never held up her face for him to kiss—all her loving, gentle, caressing manner with him had disappeared.

The pain was just a little sharper and deeper when she found that he did not notice any of these things.

There were times when she longed with her whole heart to fling herself down upon the ground and die; but, even as hate had kept Martin Ray alive, pride had kept her.

She had made her decision, and nothing could change her.

Basil and Hettie loved each other with true love.

Believing it, she looked the fact in the face to see what was to be done.

Her first determination was that no one should ever know of her discovery; her sacrifice should be complete.

They might say afterwards that she had been capricious or wilful, even false, but they could never ridicule her.

They would never know in what shape her father's curse had fallen upon her.

Hettie had never seen or heard of the letter; she had no notion of its existence, and she should not have any.

She had laid her plan of action, if she had but the courage, the strength and the self-sacrifice to carry it out.

Sir Basil and Hettie could never suspect that their secret had been revealed to Leah by her father.

Whatever she did, they must believe it to be the expression of her own feeling, the result of her own thoughts; they could not attribute it to any influence brought to bear upon her.

Her life just then was very quiet, owing to Hettie's illness; there was neither visiting nor the receiving of visitors.

Had it been otherwise, the strain upon her would have been too great, and she would have given way.

She lived quietly through it, longing at morn for night, longing at night for morning.

Her heart was dead with her; she scarcely ate or slept.

There were days when she scarcely left her room, when she sat there stunned, dazed, bewildered with the weight of her own sorrow, the grief piercing ever and ever deeper into her heart.

No one guessed her secret or imagined that, though heiress of the vast wealth of Sir Arthur Hatton, and acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful women in England, she was nevertheless one of the most miserable and desolate of human beings.

There were times when she reflected that she had read of the agonies of death, of people lingering in torture, unable to die; but surely no agony had ever been so prolonged as hers.

She saw every day the man whom she loved so well, yet who had preferred another to her.

She had to meet him, to appear as usual with him, the horrible pain of wounded love and jealousy knawing like a hidden cancer in her breast.

Every day she had to minister to the sister who had supplanted her, to cheer and soothe her.

When she was consulted about the decorations and improvements at Glen, which she knew well she would never see, she gave her answers plainly and clearly.

Without a break in her voice, she chose colors and ornaments, and talked of harmonious arrangements, and then went silently to her room to undergo the agonies of despair.

And when Sir Arthur talked about the future, about next year, when she would be at Glen, she always replied to him with a smile—but that smile was sadder than any tears.

As the days passed, she grew thinner and paler, and her eyes brighter.

She never sang.

She had never touched her piano since the reading of the fatal letter.

Her interest in everything was dead.

She spent more time before the picture of Œnone than in any other place.

The terrible repression told upon her.

If she could have spoken of her loss, if she could have eased her heart by a flow of passionate tears, it would have been better.

But there was no such relief; it was all speechless, dark unchanging sorrow.

Great silent woe looked out of the dark eyes.

"I wonder," she said to herself, "if I have accurately measured my strength?"

She did not want to break down in England; she wanted to go with Hettie to Mentone.

From there she would write to Sir Basil, giving him his freedom, but refusing to tell him her reason for doing so.

There would be anger and surprise, but no one would know her secret.

And beyond the writing of that letter she never looked or thought; it was the end of life to her.

Each night, as it came, she measured her strength for the next day, and each night found her weaker; but her secret was so well kept that no one suspected it.

All the arrangements were made for the journey; the Duke and Duchess of Rosedene were awaiting anxiously the arrival of the sisters, when a complication arose.

The member for the county had died suddenly, and this brought about the very opening for which Sir Basil had longed.

He was determined to contest the election, to secure his seat in Parliament, and then to make for himself fame and the name of a statesman.

He was born for it; politics were his vocation.

This was an opportunity not to be lost.

With some exertion, and with the help of Sir Arthur Hatton, he felt reasonably sure of success.

Of course he could not accompany the sisters, as had been arranged, to France, so it

was decided that Sir Arthur should take them thither and remain for a day or two, and then return at once to help with his canvass.

The news affected the sisters differently. Hettie had dreaded the journey with Sir Basil, yet had not liked to raise any objection.

Leah had told herself that she should take her last look at his beloved face on English soil.

She made no remark when Sir Arthur told her of the change in their plans; and he was blind enough to think that her silence arose from some resentment against her lover—so little idea had anyone of the true facts of the case.

They thought Leah very quiet for some days after that.

Who could guess that in her own mind she was bidding adieu to the place she loved so well?

Once she asked Sir Arthur to drive her over to Glen—Sir Basil had gone to London on business.

The General was delighted at the request; he rejoiced to think that Leah took such an interest in the improvements.

As he drove her along the road, he jested with her and teased her; he did not notice that she sat by his side, cold and pale as a marble statue, with such an expression of bitter pain on her face as would have startled even a stranger.

She was going to say good-bye to the beautiful house that would never be her home now.

She wanted to look once more on the lavish decorations, at the rooms prepared for her, which she would never use.

She tried to picture Hettie there—Hettie, with her sweet face and golden hair, who would be so well suited to this dainty, picturesque home; and she wondered as she went through the rooms, whether, when Basil was established there, with Hettie as his wife, he would remember her and her great love, whether any idea would come to him of her suffering or of her broken heart.

"You look very ill and tired, Leah," said the General, in deep concern.

He had caught sight of her as she came from the room that was to have been her boudoir, and she was off her guard.

He was shocked at the white face and the dark haggard eyes.

He kissed her lovingly.

"My dear Leah, what is the matter?

"Is there anything more than fatigue?"

She raised her brave face, he never forgot the look or the voice, and said:

"No, there is nothing wrong; and I have done nothing which could tire me."

She looked round for the last time upon a scene that she was never to see again; and, as she drove back, she felt that the pain at her heart could never be sharper.

CHAPTER LIII.

"THERE is something strange in Miss Hatton's face to-day," said Leah's maid to her confidante, the housekeeper.

"No one seems to notice anything very wrong about her; but I am very anxious for her.

"She is so thin that I can never make her dresses fit her now; and she is often so colorless that I have to use *poudre de rose* to make her presentable, she who had the loveliest bloom in the world."

"I see the change," returned the housekeeper gloomily.

"She thinks too much of other people.

"There is nothing like taking care of oneself.

"She has studied everything for Miss Hettie's comfort, but I have never heard her speak of herself."

"I cannot make it out," said the maid. "I am sure she has not been to sleep all night; she has sat up.

"I saw death in her face when I went into her room."

"I should think there is nothing wrong between her and Sir Basil," remarked the housekeeper.

"No, I am sure that there is not," was the reply.

"They are to be married when she comes back from France.

"Still I am unhappy about her; there is something the matter, I am quite sure.

"One night I had to go to her room, and she was moaning in her sleep like a dying child; and I have never seen such a face as she had when I went into her room this morning."

For the day and the hour were come.

Sir Basil was to go with them as far as Dover, and see them safely on board.

They were all four to start by the midday train from Arley to London.

Leah had measured her strength that morning, and found it rapidly failing.

"I could not live through two more days of it," she said.

"Thank Heaven, it is almost over!"

She was passive, while her maid took all the pains she could to hide the shrinking of the graceful figure, the pallor of the beautiful face.

She must keep up appearances while she was in England, amongst those who knew her; but, when she was across the sea, she could give way, she could droop and die as she would, but not here.

She bade farewell to the grand old home where she had been so utterly, but so falsely happy.

She stood for some time on the terrace where the passion-flowers grew—the spot where she had seen her lover first, and where her heart had gone out to him.

She kissed the bare brown branches.

They would live again; they would be covered with green leaves and starry flowers when leaves and flowers would gladden her eyes no more.

She kissed the pictured face of Œnone, recalling every word that had been spoken between Sir Basil and herself on that day when they had stood in front of it.

It was like parting with a living friend.

She stretched out her hands with a great cry when she took her last look at the room where she had spent such happy hours.

All earth and air seemed burning fire.

Oh, for rest, for change, for the coolness even of the grave!

Those who saw Miss Hatton's face when she left Brentwood never forgot it.

It was a strange journey to Dover.

Sir Arthur was the only one who talked.

Hettie avoided either looking at or speaking to Sir Basil, and Leah could have laughed in bitter amusement at the scene.

Sir Arthur spoke of his nieces' return, of the marriage, of Glen, of Basil in Parliament, and saw nothing wrong.

They stood together on deck at last, a blue sky above them, the sun shining on the white cliffs of Dover and on the sea, which was almost as smooth as a mirror.

Sir Arthur took Hettie to the other side of the vessel.

"They will have so much to say to each other; lovers always have.

"We will leave them alone, Hettie."

So they stood side by side, the deathly pallor of Leah's face hidden by her veil.

A terrible calm had fallen over her.

She loved Sir Basil still with her whole heart; she could have knelt down there and covered his hands with burning kisses and burning tears.

She held them for a moment in a close grasp, while she looked into his face for the last time.

The solemn shadow of eternity lay over her.

He was telling her something about Glen and about Parliament.

She did not hear the words.

To her the moment was solemn, as though her soul were on her lips, and her eyes were fixed on his with a strained, lingering gaze.

How well she loved him!

And he had cared nothing for her; he had preferred some one else.

He was asking her if she were sorry to leave him, and she was unable to answer him.

The white lips were quite stiff and cold.

Then there came a shout from the sailors.

All was in readiness; those who were for shore must leave.

The moments were numbered; her eyes never left his, her hand still held his.

"I must go," he said.

"Good-bye, Leah."

He bent down and kissed her lips.

He started to find them so cold.

"Good-bye," he repeated.

"A pleasant prosperous journey, and a happy return!"

"Good-bye, Basil; good-bye, my love," she said; and the next moment she was looking over the waters alone.

He was gone.

She felt that she would never see him again in this world.

She was glad to raise her veil and let the sea-breeze play upon her face.

She was free now; she need no longer keep up appearances.

She had looked her last upon him.

The long strain, the long tension was ended.

The calm plash of the waves seemed to cool the fever that had laid waste her life; all earth and air were no longer burning fire.

The rest of the journey was like a dream to her, and she never awoke from it until she stood in the *salon* of the villa at Mentone, and saw the Duchess regarding her with tearful eyes.

"Great Heaven," she cried, "this is not Leah; this is a shadow!

"I thought it was Hettie who had been ill!"

"So it was.

"I have not been ill," said a voice which the Duchess hardly recognized as Leah's.

"I am well; but my journey has tired me."

"What has gone wrong in the girl's life?" thought the kindly woman.

"The only thing that she reminds me of is a flower broken by a tempest."

When chance gave her a few minutes alone with the General, she turned to him with an anxious face.

"Sir Arthur," she said abruptly, "what has happened to Leah?"

"To Leah?

"Nothing," he replied.

"Nothing!" said the Duchess.

"Are you blind, that you cannot see?

"She has death in her face."

"My dear Duchess, you exaggerate," answered Sir Arthur.

"She has not been well lately: she has tired herself by nursing Hettie.

"Besides, the journey has been a trying one."

"Nonsense!" said the Duchess.

"That will not account for the great change.

"Tell me—for I am her best friend—is all right between Leah and Sir Basil?"

"Yes.

"The wedding has been delayed on account of Hettie's illness, but Leah does not mind it.

"Basil would have been with us now but for the Parliamentary business."

"And you are quite certain that there has been no misunderstanding between them?" pursued the Duchess.

"Certain?

"Most assuredly!

"Basil came with us as far as Dover; and you should have seen the lovers' parting!

"All is right there."

"Beautiful Leah Hatton is going to die," said the Duchess to herself; "and nothing will persuade me that all is well between her and her lover."

The General did not feel quite so sure that all was right when he parted from his niece.

She was not looking well, certainly, and the way in which she hung round his neck with kisses and murmured words of gratitude struck him.

The Duchess made one effort to win the girl's confidence.

The family had been a week at Mentone, and Hettie was already much better.

"Leah," she said gently one day, taking her hand, "you know I have always been your best friend.

"I love you with a great affection, and I am more than distressed about you.

"You are not happy; will you tell me why?"

Leah bent her head and kissed the kindly hand that rested in her own.

"I am as happy as it is in my nature to be," she replied gently.

"Tell me, Leah, is all well with you and Sir Basil?"

"All is well," she answered.

"Dear Duchess, I have nothing to tell.

"If I had, it would be told to you, my best friend."

Her Grace of Rosedene was not satisfied.

"If there is nothing to cause you unhappiness, then I am convinced that you are altogether out of health.

"No girl could look like you do without some reason for it.

"You have completely changed; every one is asking me what is wrong with you."

After that, Leah took a sudden resolution.

There was in Mentone a celebrated English physician, Doctor Evan Griffiths—a skilful prosperous man, very popular amongst the invalids and the English at Mentone.

He lived with his mother in a pretty little villa.

Popular as he was, he had never married.

It was said that he had no time for wooing.

One evening, as Doctor Griffiths sat alone in his study, the servant announced a young lady.

She had sent no card and had given no name, but looked very ill.

At first the Doctor felt annoyed.

He had no liking for mysterious patients, and felt it hard that he could not have one cigar in peace over the *Lancet*.

"Show the lady in here," he said impatiently.

But his impatience died away when a tall closely-veiled woman came in and stood silently before him.

She did not speak until the servant had closed the door; then she raised her veil so that he could see her face; and he was startled by its delicacy and wonderful beauty.

"I know that I am calling at an unusual time," she said.

"I thank you very much for seeing me.

"I have a question to ask you—a question of life or death.

"Will you answer it?"

"If I can," he said.

"Does it concern yourself?"

"Yes," she replied.

And then he felt that death, and not life, would be the answer, if he could judge from her face.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Under the Hedge.

BY P. C. BERRETTA.

ALL through the long pleasant summer on the Williams Farm, the two girls had been rivals, almost to the death.

Society has its restraints—well for many of us that it is so.

For, on the last evening of her stay at the farmhouse, the heart of Kate Jarvis was full of cold and deadly anger, as she reviewed the events of the campaign, and knew that it had failed.

She had come to that lonely and secluded place only because Charles Edwards, the handsome and wealthy widower from Australia, was to be there.

Throughout the cool days of autumn, and the hazy beauty of the summer, she had lingered on, hoping continually that she might win him away from Lily Melville, whom, in her secret heart, she stigmatised as "a dark little thing, with not an atom of style about her."

But to the end of time the question "Why does a man love one woman and not another?" will never be satisfactorily answered.

Miss Jarvis, large, tall, stately and fair, devoted to dress, and with social talents of the very highest order, had only received from the gallant widower the ordinary attentions which every gentleman is bound to pay to the ladies near him.

While Lily Melville, who was poor and unnoticed, who toiled daily with her pencil for her daily bread, and who was utterly unable to follow the shifting fashions of the day, even if she had wished to do so, Lily Melville had won the widower's heart, and need only say the word to receive the offer of his hand.

Kate Jarvis did not deceive herself.

She had watched their parting only two days previously, and had read her own doom in Charles Edwards' face.

"May I write to you?" had been his last words to Lily.

For Kate he had only the conventional regrets at parting, mingled with his adieu.

Not one word of hope as to any future meeting.

Yes, she had failed, utterly and ignominiously failed, and now she must pack up the useless finery, which had cost so much, and go back to the city, to the narrow, pinching consideration of ways and means, from which, by the capture of this man and his fortune, she had hoped to have been for ever freed.

"If I could only spoil her happiness, I would not so much mind giving up my own," she thought, as she walked along the road that led from the farm to the village on the third evening after Mr. Edwards' departure.

"But how?

"And how disgustingly self-satisfied she looks.

"I hate her!

"I hated her from the first day of her coming, though I did not then know why."

At that moment she saw the boy who was employed at the farm to run on errands to the village.

He was running up the road at a great pace, with a countenance black with discontent.

"Have you seen Farmer Williams, miss?" he asked anxiously.

"He came home from the village half-an-hour ago," said Kate.

"Just my luck," whined the boy.

"I wanted to give him these, and now I must go all the way with them."

He held out two letters as he spoke, with an appealing look at Kate.

One for herself, the other sealed with a seal, and directed in a hand that she knew only too well.

"I'm going back.

"I'll take them for you," she said mechanically.

The boy gave her the letters, thanked her, and tore back to the village whistling.

"Shall I?

"Shall I not?" thought Kate, standing still in that lonely place.

She opened her own letter.

It contained only the dressmaker's bill for those pretty summer toilets which had been of so little use to her.

How was she to pay that bill, now that the rich husband on whom she had so securely counted had turned out to be a myth?

"It is too hard!" she exclaimed aloud, in sudden passion.

"Why should this good fortune come to her and not to me?

"She shall never have the satisfaction of triumphing over me.

"I wonder what he has written?"

Crack went the seal as she trifled with it.

But in her frenzy of jealous anger and hatred, only an "ironclad" envelope could possibly have withstood her hand.

The next moment the letter was opened out before her.

With a sickening heart she read the manly, straightforward proposal of marriage.

But her fair proud face brightened at the concluding words—

"I had no courage to say this while we were together; nor have I courage to meet your refusal, even though it should be a written one. So I will beg of you, if your heart is otherwise engaged, not to pain me by the knowledge. If you do not answer this letter, I shall understand that it is for that reason. If you do answer it, you will make me the happiest of men.

"Yours faithfully,
"CHARLES EDWARDS."

"There is the answer," said Kate spitefully, tearing the letter across and across, and thrusting it deep into the hedge in its envelope.

Then she walked back to the farm.

That night the first snow of the autumn fell, and the farmhouse was deserted the next day by the last of its summer guests, good Mrs. Williams writing down the city address of Lily Melville, and faithfully promising to forward any letters that might arrive, while Kate Jarvis looked quietly on.

* * * * * *

Two months went by.

Lily, toiling away at her paintings, found time to wonder sadly why the hoped-for letter from Charles Edwards never came.

Not for his fortune did she love him, but for himself.

It was a mild, open winter, and when the holidays drew near, she took the few dollars she had so painfully saved, and went back to the old farmhouse where she had first met him.

Since she was to see his face no more, it would be some consolation, although a sad one, to visit the places where she had been so happy by his side.

The secluded road that led to the village had been one of their favorite walks.

There Lily lingered through a whole sunny afternoon—the last of her stay that year, as her purse was nearly empty.

Some bitter tears were in her eyes as she turned to go.

A carriage was coming from the station, and not caring to be seen there, weeping, she drew back, with her face toward the barren hedge.

At her feet something white gleamed.

She picked it up mechanically, and, to her astonishment, saw a torn and stained letter, with her own name upon the envelope.

Under the ice and snow of the past autumn it had lain, waiting for her coming.

She could still decipher it, and as she read, a mountain of snow and ice seemed to be lifted from her heart.

"Thank Heaven! he did love me!" she exclaimed.

"Lily—Miss Melville!" said a familiar voice.

She turned.

The carriage which she had seen stood waiting in the road, and at her side was Charles Edwards, looking from her happy face to the torn letter in her hand with a questioning gaze.

"I was coming back for a few days to the dear old place," he said.

"You made me very unhappy last autumn.

"Yet I am like the moth with the candle—not wise enough to keep away, even after getting severely burned."

"I only found it this moment, under the hedge," stammered Lily, giving him the fragments that she held.

"It must have been lost and hidden under the ice all this time."

"You would have answered me then, Lily?" he asked.

Her shy happy eyes looked gently up at him.

"Drive on to the farm, my man.

"We will walk," he called to the staring man.

And drawing Lily's little hand within his arm, they began their life-journey happily together.

BARBARA GRAHAM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWICE MARRIED," "MABEL MAY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.—[CONTINUED.]

IT seemed an age ere the old housekeeper came, and when she did, she could give little comfort.

Claudia had all the symptoms of rapidly approaching fever.

Cold shivers and hot burnings succeeded each other in quick succession, and a parched thirst was constantly inducing a piteous demand for drink.

"Miss Barbara, you must not hang over her like that," said the good housekeeper.

"It's putting your life in jeopardy.

"We must have a nurse."

"I am not afraid of the fever, and shall not take it," replied Barbara; "but if I do, there are few who would miss me, and I could not leave her to nurse."

"I do wish the doctor would come," said the kind woman, meditatively.

"Ah, you're just like Miss Florence, for all the world.

"It's just what she'd have done; she had just such a spirit as you."

Again Barbara longed to ask about this wonderful Florence, whose name and memory seemed still so vivid on the minds of the old servants of the household; but there was no time to attend to any one but the restless, moaning invalid.

It was scarcely an hour when the doctor came; he looked exhausted and haggard.

"It is the third case since yesterday," he said.

"The poison has been at work, I expect, secretly, and now it is appearing with a vengeance!"

"Then it is the fever," said Barbara, quickly.

"Certainly," he replied; "and you must not remain in this atmosphere.

"Where is Mr. Ashley?"

"Do not send for him," said Barbara, grasping his arm convulsively; "he must not come in here.

"Keep him away.

"He can do no good, and he would be sure to take it."

"Why more than you?" he asked.

"He has had it, though I confess there is small safeguard in that."

"I can be of use; he can not," said Barbara.

"If you would have me keep my spirits and health, and do my duty, I entreat you, forbid him to come near the room."

"I will see what can be done," said the doctor.

"You are nobly unselfish, young lady, to incur this peril, and devote yourself to the sick; but it is a terrible risk.

"It may cost you your life."

"I know it," she said.

"It is of little moment to others; and I am prepared for the worst myself."

"Then, Heaven preserve you!" said the doctor.

"Your friend has been seized more violently—I believe, from terror.

"Her best chance is in constant care and nursing—it is worth a whole apothecary's shop.

"I will give you some directions respecting her; and mind that you keep yourself well up with stimulants, and take any rest you can—it is your only chance."

"One word, sir," said Barbara.

"Do you suppose that Miss Sabine took the infection yesterday?"

"Impossible to tell," he replied.

"I should suppose the poison must have been in her system, like many others; but with the horror she had of the disease, it may have seized her more rapidly.

"But that matters little.

"We must battle with it as we best can."

Barbara returned to the bedside of the patient.

Claudia seemed conscious of her presence, and tears stole from beneath the long lashes, and coursed down the burning cheeks, as she closed her fingers tightly over those of her companion.

"Will he save me?" she said.

"Must I die?"

"Please God, no, dear Claudia," replied Barbara; "only the calm and brave, and we shall bring you through."

"And Mr. Ashley," said Claudia; "my ——"

"He will be near you," said Barbara.

"Compose yourself: try to sleep."

Hours passed on; the fever made rapid progress, more rapid than even Dr. Somers had predicted, and by the time the rest of the household were astir, the sufferer was delirious—a soft, gentle delirium perhaps, but still a complete wandering of the senses an utter unconsciousness of all around, a restless, uncontrollable anxiety, almost amounting to terror, that was nearly as distressing as actual ravings.

Claudia's beautiful face was crimson with fever, her parched lips parted, her panting breath labored and irregular.

Barbara sat by the bedside, moistening at intervals the invalid's lips and brow with cooling liquids, smoothing her hot pillow, speaking words of gentle comfort and soothing to the victim of her own wilful weakness.

Barbara's back was to the door, her whole attention fixed on Claudia, whose dark eyes, wild and vacant, rested on her face.

Her lips moved audibly, and Barbara bent down to listen.

"He will never know, he will never even hear.

"How should he?

"He has left me; the cold grave will soon shut me in, and I shall see him no more, no more!

"Oh, my love, my love!"

She shuddered, and then went on in the monotonous unconsciousness of delirium.

"My own, my beautiful love!

"He can't reproach me; he cannot be angry.

"No, no, I only did as he said: I was not false—never, never!"

Barbara listened with a sick heart: she comprehended all now.

Claudia's weakness and suffering, her intense Southern nature, her slavish devotion to one so unworthy of her, her half-unconscious treachery to the noble heart she had won; the reckless, feverish wilfulness that her very misery had engendered; all was explained now; and the noble girl's sympathies, rather than blame, were lavished on the sufferer.

"My poor Claudia," she said, bending tenderly over her, "be comforted.

"All will be well.

"You know not how noble, how unselfish he is.

"He will free from you when he knows you love another.

"Only try to get well, and all will be made happy by his goodness.

"Oh, if you did but know him! you must love and trust him, dearest."

The words seemed for a moment to attract the confused attention of the sufferer; an earnest, inquiring look, a gleam of hope and happiness, seemed to come over the wan features.

Then the momentary comprehension seemed to pass away: and with a low, piteous moan she turned impatiently from her nurse.

Barbara felt a gentle touch on her shoulder: she looked round, and saw Sidney Ashley standing by her.

She started, with a cry of surprise and distress, and without a moment's pause to consider the action, she took his hand, and half forcibly drew him from the bedside.

"Go, in pity, go!" she said; "you can do no good, and are only risking your own life."

"And are you not risking yours?" he said, with a gentler tone and look than she had dared to expect.

"That matters not," she said; "it is valueless.

"For Claudia's sake, go."

A spasm crossed his face.

He gave another glance at the bed, with an expression that Barbara could not read; so sad, and yet so gentle was the look.

Was it sorrow for Claudia's danger, or for her faithlessness, that spoke in that lingering gaze?

"Come," Barbara again said, impatiently, drawing him to the door.

A frenzied feeling of the danger he was running gave her a boldness that afterwards brought burning flames of shame to her face.

She drew him half dragged him to the open door, then strove to close it after him.

But he held her fast, and gently impelled her reluctant form into the dressing-room on which it opened.

Then, to her utter astonishment, he passed his arm round her and drew her towards him; bending his proud head, he kissed her pale brow with a grave, calm tenderness that was all unlike his usual manner.

She felt how she could have humbled herself to him at that moment—how she could have humbled herself to him all her sorrow, her deep sympathy; but her promise to Claudia, her own still half-unsuspected feelings for him, kept her silent; and, fearful of betraying herself, she quietly withdrew from his encircling arm.

He did not attempt to detain her, nor appear angry at the moment, but still holding her hand, he stepped back a few paces to scan her countenance.

"How wan and haggard you look!" he said, sadly.

"Child, you have tortured and disappointed me beyond expression by your obstinacy."

"I have but done my duty," she replied; "but it is no time for argument now; I must return to Claudia.

"You will trust her to me.

"You will not expose yourself for no avail."

"Sit down, child," he said.

"You are trembling from exhaustion."

It was from a far different feeling that the orphan's frame shook, and her lips quivered as she spoke, but she did not deny the assertion, and sank on the chair he drew for her.

"Was Claudia taken violently?" he asked.

"What did Dr. Somers say?

"Why did you not send for me?"

"She is delirious," was the reply.

"I think her exceeding alarm has hastened the disease; but Dr. Somers has hope, especially as she is young and strong. I will take care of her, indeed I will—only be prudent."

"I cannot leave you to such peril," he said firmly.

"The danger has been incurred already, if there is any," said Barbara.

"I have no fear; and there is no one to miss me if I were taken.

"I must, I will stay with her.

"I have promised it."

"Do you always keep your promise?" he asked.

"I believe so," she replied; but she heard Claudia's voice in somewhat louder tones, and hastily rose to return to the room.

"Child," he said, placing himself before her, "you are not always to have your way in spite of me.

"I shall share your watch, your nursing of the poor girl.

"I have had the disease; there is little risk for me; and if anything happened to you, I could never have a moment's peace more."

Barbara would have remonstrated; but the stern though sad look in his dark eye, daunted even her brave spirit, and she only ventured to murmur, "But your life is so much more precious than mine."

"You are wrong," he said, bitterly.

"I tell you I would not wish to survive the only being whom I can look to for sympathy, for a congenial, kindred spirit.

"Barbara, either with me, or not at all, you remain in my ward's sick room."

Barbara bowed proudly, and turned away to the room where the invalid's voice was heard in piteous accents speaking her name.

"Barbara," said she, "is he come?

"Did he say he would come?

"I thought I heard his voice."

"She raves," said Barbara, hastily, as she saw Sidney Ashley's face, with a grey shadow deepening over it, bent on the unconscious sufferer.

"Yes; he will save you.

"Be calm.

"All will be well," he said, in soft, gentle tones.

Claudia smiled, and seemed satisfied for a moment, then turned and muttered on indistinctly:

"He knows all, yes, and will save me from my fate yet; it is not quite his voice, his look.

Oh, my love! my love! speak again; is it you?

Have you indeed been true to your poor Claudia?"

Barbara could not tell whether Sidney Ashley caught the half-inaudible words, and she stooped over the bed, and bathed Claudia's face to prevent their meeting his ears.

She gazed up again at him, to judge from his expression whether indeed he could comprehend Claudia's meaning; but there was the same quiet, sad look, that baffled all attempts to read it aright.

"Were you up all night, Barbara?" he asked.

"I am quite fresh—quite well," she replied.

"That is a matter of doubt," he said.

"However, I shall make proper arrangements for your comfort and safety.

"Go now and get some breakfast.

"I will remain with Claudia."

"I will not leave these rooms till Claudia is better," she said, firmly.

"All that I need can be put in the dressing-room for me.

"You agitate her, indeed you do.

"She does not know you, and it excites her."

"Yes, it always excites persons in fever to see those they love best," he said bitterly.

"But, for the present, I fancy she has nothing but past vague dreams in her heart, that neither you nor I can fully understand nor soothe."

Barbara made an impatient gesture as Claudia again tossed restlessly towards the side of the bed where they were standing.

"Claudia — Claudia," he said, bending over her once more, "do you know me, Sidney Ashley, your friend, your guardian? Trust him for your welfare, your happiness.

"He will watch over you, and guard you, forgive all."

The words seemed to fall gently on her ears; but then, a moment, she began to moan again.

"Where is he?

"Why will he not come; why will he not claim me, as he promised?

"Oh, my head, my head!

"If he but kissed this burning brow, it would be well; he is so noble, so good, so loving!"

Sidney gazed calmly at her; then he turned away, without obeying the natural impulse to press his lips on the pale, lovered brow.

Barbara looked anxiously, fearfully at him, and he caught her glance.

"Do not fear," he said; "I can wait; I can be patient till the truth comes to light.

"Child, do you think your utmost efforts could avail if those wild words have any meaning but one?

"Leave all to me.

"You do not know, do not trust me yet."

It was surprising what a burden those quiet words removed from Barbara's heart; the calm, strong man was so welcome a support even to her brave spirit; and then the terrible responsibility of Claudia's secret was in some measure removed by his apparent interpretation of its meaning.

And yet a pang, a bitter pang, crossed her mind at the idea that he so loved Claudia as to trust her, believe in her, stake his very life on hers; while to her, the obscure, the loving, the devoted, the true, he was the suspicious, stern, unflinching judge.

Was it ever to be thus?

Was she ever to be misjudged, blamed, neglected, scorned, even where her whole heart—her life—would have been given up for him who thus lavished his wealth of love and trust on one all ungrateful, and unworthy of the confidence, the devotion!

Then came the piteous, moaning sound; and Barbara, with a sharp self-reproach, returned to the side of the sufferer.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DAYS passed on, with little change from the dreary monotony of a sick room, save the slight variations of slender hope and heart-sickening fear, as the symptoms of the sufferer abated or increased.

Barbara's strength had to all appearance kept up under the constant strain on her health; still, her continued vigils and exertions were exhausting her.

Her limbs trembled as she walked, and there was a dull pain in her head that she could not get rid of.

Her appetite had long since forsaken her, and it was only by the force of Sidney Ashley's determined will that she was induced to eat anything.

Sometimes she stole from the room to breathe for a moment the fresh air, to relax the constant tension on the nerves, the constraint on every movement and word in presence of the sufferer.

And then, when the excitement no longer supported her, she was conscious of the prostration of strength, the depression of nerves, and the utter hopelessness that was the natural result of so terrible a strain.

In such moments as these the remembrance of that unhappy woman in the Dell cottages, of the mysterious stranger who had appeared so cognizant of her story and her destiny, would return to Barbara, and she felt a longing to know something more of the secrets he had professed to know.

Yet it was so wild, so improbable a story at which he had hinted, that her better judgment told her he was but mocking her credulity, or striving to work on it to further some sinister and evil views.

Once or twice Barbara felt inclined to ask the housekeeper, her only coadjutor, save Sidney Ashley, in nursing the invalid, whether any one had asked for her during her attendance in the sick room.

Then the idea that such a question might lead to unpleasant surmises, checked the impulse, and she remained in ignorance of what she most desired to know.

Thus had passed a dreary fortnight of unremitting exertion and anxiety, and the crisis was hourly approaching that was to decide the fate of the beautiful betrothed of Sidney Ashley.

Dr. Somers had said that another twenty-four hours would bring the fever to its height, and then the young creature, whose lot so many would have envied, would either sink into the grave, or return to life and light, and love, and happiness.

Would the life that might yet be granted restore Claudia to the chief treasures that it could offer?

Who could decide?

Not Barbara assuredly.

Closely as she watched Sidney Ashley's looks and manner, she could not divine his feelings or intentions to his suffering ward.

Nothing but the grave concern, the manly anxiety, the tender care of an affectionate guardian, a matured and self-controlled lover, were to be read in looks and actions.

He watched over Claudia as a father, a brother, even a husband might have done, but rarely betrayed the emotion of a lover.

To Barbara, Sidney's manner had been peculiar and chilling since that first memorable morning.

The shade of emotion, the affectionate regret, the deep regard which even the anger and disappointment he felt had betrayed, were totally banished from his mind.

He was unvaryingly watchful over her safety and comfort, but cold, stern, and impenetrable.

And Barbara, in her turn, made a strong and generally successful effort to hide the pain which this coldness caused her, and to behave with the same indifference and formality as he chose to adopt towards her.

On the day when Dr. Somers told them to expect the crisis of Claudia's fate, the weather suddenly changed.

The scorching sun, which had brought that fearful pestilence on its withering rays, gave way to a dark, thick canopy of clouds, that promised the refreshing rain which might bring a healthful influence on the plague-stricken district; and as the evening drew on, the cool pattering of rain-drops sounded like heralds of hope and mercy on the verandah outside the windows of that chamber of suffering.

Barbara listened to them with delight; the omen seemed a propitious one.

She turned to the bed—Claudia was all unconscious of the blessing.

Barbara touched her brow, but no token of recognition greeted her anxious gaze.

The fever was drawing to its height.

Barbara listened to the sound of her labored breathing, and falling on her knees

she earnestly prayed that the sufferer might be spared.

Long had Barbara been thus pleading, when a light murmur fell on her ear.

It was the voice of Sidney Ashley.

Laying his hand for an instant on hers, he said:

"Barbara, do you believe that God hears your prayer?"

"I do," she replied.

"Then ask him to take Claudia to himself, rather than let her drag out an existence rendered joyless by the burden of an unrequited or a worthless attachment."

Barbara gazed up at him in questioning wonder, but it was no time for asking questions.

The safety of the patient depended on perfect silence.

Dr. Somers had ordered that no one but Barbara should remain in the room after administering the opiate, on which everything depended.

Sidney remained only while the patient took the medicine.

With his own hands he gave Barbara a glass of wine, and then, with a cold look, and a whispered:

"I shall remain in the next room," he departed.

Barbara's eyes followed him, and she felt a sharp pain at his marked coldness towards herself.

But the sudden movement of the sufferer called her attention to the more urgent duties that pressed on her; and with a pang of self-reproach at her momentary absorption in her own more selfish sufferings, she resolutely devoted herself to the sole care of her helpless charge.

She arranged the pillows in the most comfortable form, drew the curtains, and then sat down to go through her lonely watch.

The cool night seemed to compose Barbara's fevered nerves.

The thought of the near approach of Death seemed to bring earthly sorrows and wrongs to their just level; and a calmer resignation to the will of Him who doeth all things well, stole into her heart.

At that moment she felt that, if Claudia's life were spared, she could with an unenvying spirit see her the happy bride of Sidney Ashley, and even pray that she might be worthy of him.

The peaceful influences of the hallowed hour, the solemn chamber, were on her troubled, over-tired heart.

The chastening of the proud, rebellious spirit was doing its work, and the bitterness, if not the sorrow of her lot, vanished from the musings of that long, silent watch.

She held the sufferer's hand in hers, and, by degrees, she fancied that the hot skin became moister and softer, and that the breath was drawn more easily, and at longer intervals.

The sufferer slept more calmly and continuously than she had done since the attack, and Barbara began to augur more favorably than she had hitherto dared to hope as to the result.

Hours went on.

She ventured to withdraw her hand from the relaxing grasp of the patient, and to steal to the door of the dressing-room to sign rather than speak the news to Sidney Ashley.

He was sitting with head resting on his hands.

Whether he had slept or not, Barbara could not determine; but as he looked up on her approach, his eyes were so heavy, so dark in the lids, that she felt sure he had been either in tears or in the unrefreshing sleep of deep anxiety.

"How he loves her!" was the involuntary thought that the look suggested.

And the speechless, questioning glance that took the place of words he dared not speak, confirmed the belief in his intense love for that young and inconstant being.

But Barbara had schooled her heart well, and she battled bravely with the selfish pang his look cost her.

"She sleeps calmly.

"I think she is safe," were her low soothing words.

"Be comforted.

"I fear not for her now."

The tears gushed from his eyes.

He grasped Barbara's hand; held it in his, with a look that brought the crimson tide to her face.

He half raised her hand to his lips, and then dropped it with a sudden impulse, as if its touch had stung him.

Barbara stole back, half gratified, half pained by the strange, wayward reception of her tidings: and ere she had resumed her place by her charge, a step was heard, and Dr. Somers entered the chamber with Sidney Ashley.

Few words were spoken as the physician advanced to the bed, examined the pulse, and bent over the pale and calm face of the sleeper: but his countenance betrayed the satisfaction which the change occasioned.

He turned from the bed with a smile that spoke more than words the hope he had to give, and taking Barbara's hand, he drew her to the other room, with a fatherly tenderness which the girl had so often longed to receive from some friend in whom she could trust, without fear of change and caprice.

"You may ease your mind, my little heroine," said the doctor; "your patient is safe; more thanks to your good nursing than my skill.

"But how are you, my brave child?

"We must think of you now; or we shall have you on our hands next."

"I am quite well, thank you," she replied.

"But are you sure Claudia will recover, doctor?"

"Quite sure?

"Why, no.

"There is a great deal to be done before we can put her on her feet again.

"Still, the present danger is over, and with her youth, and all the advantages she has, I doubt not we shall pull her through.

"But now you are to go away to bed, and sleep for some hours.

"I will sit with my patient, and give her what is necessary when she wakes.

"Come, be off.

"You will want all your strength before your task is ended, even if you don't take the fever yourself."

"No, I will lie down on the couch, to be ready when she wakes up," said Barbara.

"She will like to see me near her; but when she is quite conscious, and out of danger, I promise you I will go to bed."

"Mr. Ashley, will you not exert your authority?" said the doctor.

"I have none," was the cold reply.

The look and tone were even more icy than the words, and Barbara hastened back to her bed-room to hide the gush of tears which this cutting, ungrateful coldness brought from her eyes, beyond power of control.

She threw herself on the couch, hid her face in the pillow, and, happily for her, the prostration of strength and long watching overpowered all acuter suffering, and she sunk in a deep, dreamless sleep.

When she opened her eyes she felt a touch on her arm, and saw Dr. Somers standing by her.

"She has awoke, and asked for you," he said.

Barbara went immediately to Claudia's bedside.

Her eyes were open, with a recognizing expression that spoke of returning reason.

"How are you, darling?" said Barbara.

"Very weak," was the reply.

"How long have I been ill?"

"Not very long—only a fortnight," said Barbara.

"You are better now," she added, tenderly smoothing her silky hair.

The patient seemed perplexed.

She thought for a moment, and asked feebly:

"Has he been here?"

"Who?" said Barbara.

"Mr. Ashley?"

Claudia sighed; a look of disappointment came over her face, but she readily assented.

"Yes," said Barbara; "he has watched over you with me; he has been very anxious about you, dear."

A faint glow came over Claudia's pale cheek, and a tremor crept over her lips, as she said faintly:

"Barbara, does he know?"

"He knows nothing," she replied; "I cannot tell what he suspects, but he loves you dearly.

"Compose yourself and try to sleep again, dear."

Some minutes glided by, then Claudia whispered, almost inaudibly:

"Has any one else been? Any letters for me?

"Dearest, you must not speak any more just now," said Barbara; "all will be right when you get well again.

"Mr. Ashley is all that the most exacting or timid woman could wish.

"You must trust him, dear. But now you must be quiet."

Barbara had not time to say more, for the doctor returned, and Sidney Ashley with him.

Barbara saw the look of tender, anxious pleasure, the soft tone, the loving words that Sidney Ashley lavished on the sufferer as he bent over her, and the shudder with which the girl turned from his loving looks and tones.

Ought she to rejoice that her own pangs were likely to be visited on their author?

Her noble, generous nature shrunk from the baseness; and yet, was it in woman's heart to witness the unmerited tenderness lavished on one so regardless, so repelled by it, without feeling that the misery thus indicted was not confined to her own bosom?

"Young lady," said Mr. Somers, who had been steadfastly regarding her during the little episode, "you don't look the better for your apprenticeship to my profession; you are almost as colorless as our patient.

"Let me feel your pulse."

"Nor do you look well by any means, sir," she said, as she complied, with a grateful smile.

"You have been overworked far more than I have."

"Yes," said he; "only I am not a young lady of sixteen, and rather more inured to watching and anxiety than you are.

"It has been a terrible time certainly."

"Have there been many deaths in the neighborhood?" asked Barbara, timidly, for she longed to know the fate of her mysterious acquaintance.

"Not as many as the violence of the epidemic would warrant," he replied.

"About five in all; but many will feel it to their dying day; chiefly young persons.

"But, come, don't let us talk of such horrors, now that our patient is safe.

"You are to keep your promise, and go to bed now; Mr. Ashley and Mrs. Somers will take charge of the patient."

Barbara obeyed readily, for she was glad to escape from the sight of Sidney Ashley's tender love-making, and Claudia's necessary deceit in its reception, as she went to her own room for the first time for many days—to think and to arrange and collect her ideas and plans, rather than to sleep.

She gazed at herself in the glass, and smiled in painful derision at the face it reflected.

It was so thin and ghastly, her lips so colorless, and her eyes so sunken—years seemed to have gone over her since the mirror had last reflected her image; or rather she could have fancied that she had gone back to the childish days when the strange, wierd face that had so often attracted contemptuous remark, had made her a creature apart from her fellows.

She unbound her hair, and it fell like a veil around her form, when a knock suddenly disturbed her.

She went to the door; it was Mr. Ashley.

"I am sorry to recall you," he said coldly; "but I have been unexpectedly summoned away on most urgent business, and I cannot leave Claudia in any hands but yours.

"Dr. Somers has left some medicine to be given every hour. I will return to liberate you as soon as possible."

"Is that all?" said Barbara.

He bowed, and left her, and there was a freezing manner, a strange constraint that cut her to the quick.

"He shall never know how I have loved him," she exclaimed, indignantly; "and when Claudia can be left in safety, not one hour longer will I remain under his roof. I will go away from him—away from every human being who has known me.

"A curse seems to rest on my intercourse with my kind—I bring misery.

"I receive coldness and censure the instant I love, or hope for love."

Barbara hastily bound up her hair, and returned to Claudia's room, her face pale, flushed, and excited.

"Barbara, who is it?" said Claudia; "where is he gone?

"I heard some whispering. Oh if he is come! In pity go to them—I dare not think of such horrors. Oh go, or I shall be mad; I cannot bear the suspense."

"Claudia, darling," said Barbara, summoning all her calmness to quiet the trembling girl, "you are weak and fanciful, or you would not dream of such follies.

"There are so many persons by whom Mr. Ashley may be wanted on urgent business, that it is almost madness to think of such a wild fancy."

"But you will go?" she said; "in mercy go and see, Barbara."

Claudia's frame trembled so terribly that Barbara dared not refuse.

"I will ask what sort of person it was who wanted Mr. Ashley, if that will quiet you, Claudia," she said.

"But, indeed, there is not the slightest cause for such alarm."

"Quick, quick, then," murmured Claudia.

Terrified at the flashing brilliancy in the eyes, and the flushed cheeks, Barbara hastened to fulfil her errand.

It was not easily ascertained, as the servants in that large establishment were almost as ignorant of each other's movements or duties as if in a different household, and Barbara shrunk from putting the question so strangely impertinent as the inquiry insisted on by Claudia would appear.

She stole quietly past the housekeeper, who was lounging in an easy chair in the principal staircase to the first corridor, from which some of the more private sitting rooms opened.

She had to pass Mr. Ashley's library to reach the butler's room, where she intended to apply for the information on which Claudia insisted.

The sound of talking attracted Barbara's attention.

First she caught Sidney Ashley's voice in a stern, disdainful accent which she knew too well; then came a voice that was all familiar to her, and that made her blood creep with its strange, unpleasing, yet soft tones.

She had seldom heard that voice, and yet it was too familiar to her, too indelibly impressed on her memory, to be forgotten.

It was that of the stranger of the London streets, of the Dell that had wrought such evil to that household.

She shrunk from lingering, in the chance of hearing what was not intended for her ears, and hurried on to the butler's room to ascertain the name, the message given by that unwelcome visitor.

Fortune, however, favored her.

Stephen Langton appeared, instead of his father, and he started on seeing her.

"How is Miss Claudia, miss?" he said, hurriedly.

"Not worse, is she?"

"No, Stephen, no," she replied; "but I wish to speak to Mr. Ashley. Is he engaged?"

"Yes, miss; he is, with a gentleman on urgent business."

"What sort of man is he?" asked Barbara.

"An old gentleman, as far as I could see, miss, for I answered the door, as my father is ill in bed.

"At any rate, he had white hair and moustache; though he walked upright, and his eyes looked as quick and bright as yours, Miss Barbara."

Perhaps another name was on the lad's tongue, but he turned it more safely and politely to the compliment thus paid.

"You are quite sure, Stephen?" she said.

"Quite, Miss Barbara.

"I took him to the library, and left him there, while I sent in my master the card that he gave me, and I had a good look at him both times."

"Then you are sure he was not the person who came with us to the bridge the day we went to the wood, Stephen?"

"Dear me, miss, how can you think of such a thing? I hardly noticed that man much, for I was too frightened about you both, Miss Barbara: but I say that he had hair as black as yours, but the man's was white as snow.

Obliged to be satisfied, though unable to account for the wonderful similarity in the voice of two persons so widely apart in age and appearance as Stephen described, Barbara rapidly retraced her steps.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

MOSQUITOES.—A very simple and efficient remedy for mosquitoes is tincture of Persian powder. If the powder is pure a few drops of the tincture on the neck and hands will repel the most bloodthirsty mosquito from the thinnest skinned.

COTTON DUCK.—Cotton Duck bids fair to come more and more into use for roofing purposes, some of the largest mills in New England having thus employed it, and thus far, with satisfactory results. Time and exposure do not seem to injure the appearance or quality of the material.

MICA MASKS.—The use of face masks of mica, for the protection of metal and glass melters, stone masons, and other workman exposed to heat and dust, and noxious vapors, is found to be quite serviceable. These masks allow the eyes to be turned in any direction, and also admit of the wearing of glasses.

VALVE PACKING.—As a packing for valves, the recently introduced compound of india rubber and asbestos is said to prove of peculiar value, especially for range valves or high-pressure hot water cocks. As it contains no wire, the material can be cut to any required size, and it will stand any temperature.

PHOTOGRAPHY.—Some of the foreign papers have reported a discovery in photography by a French scientist. He converts a negative into a positive in this way. The back of the negative is covered with soluble asphalt and then illuminated through the negative. When the exposure is sufficient to make the light portion insoluble, the remainder of the asphalt is dissolved away in any usual manner, and lastly, the silver negative is dissolved off with the chlorides of copper and a fixing agent.

PAINT-COATING.—The *Industrial Gazette* describes a durable kind of coating for lamp shades, ceilings, &c., its advantages over oil paint in respect to beauty, permanence, and cheapness, being quite marked; it adheres firmly, remains of a brilliant white at high temperatures, contains no organic matter, and, by the use of suitable mineral colors, can have any shade imparted to it. Pure zinc white, or oxide of zinc thoroughly pulverized is added to a solution of silicate of soda, until the mixture has the consistency of ordinary oil paint; the metallic surface to be coated is first thoroughly cleansed—zinc and some other metals being treated with hydro-chloric acid—then washed with water and the above mixture laid on several times by means of a brush, until the surface is well covered. Only a short time is required between the coatings to allow the previous one to dry; but it is desirable that too much of the mixture be not made at one time, even when it is intended to apply it to surfaces of considerable extent.

Farm and Garden.

GROUND BONES.—Ground bones make the best fertilizers. The effect is more lasting from the pure bone dust than superphosphates, the latter having its effect in a great measure at first, while the other improves the land for several years.

VIOLETS.—Few things are more valued in winter than a bunch of Sweet Violets. Some may now be potted, and they will flower in the window towards spring; or a small bed of them may be made in a frame, which should be protected by a mat from severe frost. The same of Pansies.

WEEDS.—Our best farmers are beginning to learn, and, in fact, most of them have already learned, that the time spent in destroying weeds in the autumn is well spent and that if they would save time in cultivating hoed crops they must keep the weeds from seeding as much as possible in all parts of the farm; a little carelessness in this respect will soon cover a farm with weed seeds. A single root of milk weed in a mowing field, if left unmolested, will spread over and take possession of a large field in a few years.

FOR BEANPOLES.—A correspondent of the *American Cultivator* says: "In my own gardening I have found a most satisfactory substitute for beanpoles, which latter are not only expensive, but a source of trouble and care. I plant a sunflower seed by each hill of beans, the stock answering the same purpose as the ordinary beanpole, besides providing an excellent feed for my poultry. I have been using for this purpose a mammoth variety of sunflower seed, many of the flowers of which measured fifteen inches across the seed bed."

RED OAK.—Red oak is found in abundance in almost all parts of the country, and from its plentifulness and its unsuitableness for a large majority of the commercial uses in which white oak is utilized has been looked upon with contempt, but little deserved when its adaptability to the manufacture of furniture is taken into consideration. It is more brittle than white oak and more porous, and this has probably been the cause of its neglect for shipbuilding purposes, combined with the fact that it is more susceptible to the attacks of the marine insects which abound in salt water. It is not a wood which will stand the variations of wet and dry: and while white oak was to be had in abundance, the red oak was thought fit only to be made into flour barrels. When sawed just so as to fully develop the grain, there is no question of its beauty being equal to black walnut, in the eyes of those who are not prejudiced in favor of the rich dark color of the latter.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-SECOND YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 28, 1882.

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THE SPIRIT OF HAPPINESS.

True joy or happiness is not that which now often usurps this name; that trivial, vanishing, superficial thing, that only gilds the apprehension, and plays upon the surface of the soul. It is not the mere crackling of thorns, a sudden blaze of the spirits, the exultation of a tickled appetite. Joy is truly a masculine, and a severe thing; such joy as was in paradise. It is the result of a real good, suitably applied. It commences upon the solidities of truth, and the substance of fruition. It does not run out in voice, or indecent eruptions, but fills the soul, as Heaven does the universe, without noise. It is refreshing, but composed; like the pleasantness of youth, tempered with the gravity of age, or the mirth of a festival, managed with the silence of contemplation.

And it is best attained by a perfect mingling of mind and body. There can be no sharp lines drawn between the mental and spiritual nature. They merge into each other in the work of happiness, they act and react upon each other, so that to attempt to cultivate either alone, or without reference to the other, can only end in failure. A system of culture aiming at perfect joy, to be worthy the name, must embrace every element in the nature of man. It must not only convey truth, but inspire the love of it; not only enable the mind to perceive clearly the true order of things, but lead the will to respond to that order. It must provide for all needs, must strive to equip the whole nature for the battle of life, and must never lose sight of the great truth that it is not only the mind that is to be developed and educated to a perception of happiness, but the man.

This whole result represents labor. The gods, says the poet, have placed labor and toil on the way leading to the Elysian fields. Certain it is that no bread eaten by man is so sweet as that earned by his own labor, whether bodily or mental. By labor the earth has been subdued, and man redeemed from barbarism; nor has a single step in civilization been made without it. Labor is not only a necessity and a duty, but a blessing; only the idler feels it to be a curse. The duty of work is written on the bones and muscles of the limbs, the mechanism of the hand, the nerves and lobes of the brain—the sum of whose healthy action is joy and happiness, satisfaction and enjoyment. In the school of labor also is taught the best practical wisdom, nor is a life of manual employment incompatible with high mental culture and perfect bliss.

SANCTUM CHAT.

SUIT was recently brought by a resident of Palestine, Texas, against the Western Union Telegraph Company for three hundred dollars damages for failure to deliver a message, and after a stubborn contest a verdict was given for the plaintiff.

—

A YOUNG negro law student was the other day refused admission to the Massachusetts bar, not on account of his color, nor for his failure in any way to pass a satisfactory examination; but because he had written a blackmailing letter.

—

LONDON has its anti-Chinese movement, too. A company of Chinamen, doing business in that city, have gone into a scheme for importing their countrymen in large numbers for employment as servants, farm laborers, and in the trades. The project is being denounced in mass meetings.

—

A BOY was taken out of a canal in London. He was still alive, and the opinion of experts, who testified at the inquest, was that he might easily have been revived. A physician was summoned, but he refused to respond, because nobody would guarantee the payment of his fee. When a humane man was found it was too late to do any good.

—

IF there is one thing needed more than another in this country it is a law requiring belts, shafts, pulleys, and all such rapidly-revolving machinery to be enclosed in some manner. Hardly a day passes but the press of the country is called upon to chronicle a terrible accident arising from the clothing of some workman or visitor becoming entangled in the machinery.

—

PRINCE BISMARCK is a man "that hath no music in his soul." Talking recently with a famous painter, his guest at Varzin, he frankly owned that neither he nor any of his children possessed even the rudiments of musical feeling. Now and then he did not object to hearing a good Italian hand-organ, or an accordeon, but as for orchestras, pianos, the opera, prima donna—bah! he had no time to waste over such nonsense; and as for tenor singers, over whom so many went into ecstasies, he could not endure them.

—

A PRIVATE soldier at Fort Clark, Texas, writes that discontent in the army begins at the dining table, where soldiers receive penitentiary fare. From the lawful good rations of the soldier, he says, there must be taken pay for the bakery, garden seeds, garden tools, post library, post school, gymnasium, trees, vines, bushes, printing press, improvement of the table, comfort of men in quarters amusement of the men (!) and music for the aristocratic hops where the hungry soldier paces as a sentry in a midnight rain.

—

THAT the youthful wives of the Hindoos are much under the personal jurisdiction of their mothers-in-law is a peculiar fact. Appalling consequences have been brought to light in a case of suicide in Bombay. The wife, a child in age, who committed self-destruction, was driven to it by persecution at the hands of her husband's mother. The coroner said that by far the largest number of female Hindoo suicides are those of women between the ages of twelve and twenty, and that the cause is, in nearly every case, the despotism of a mother-in-law.

—

NEVER since the discovery of gold in Australia, writes a Melbourne correspondent, has there been a greater demand for all classes of labor, skilled and unskilled, than that which prevails at the present time. From the building trades and the gold fields, from the farms and from the squatters' runs, from factories, warehouses and foundries, the cry is for fresh hands. And "a few thousand domestic servants poured into the colony at the present time would be instantly absorbed by town and country at wages which would astonish themselves and the friends they leave behind them."

—

AN Englishman has just established a manufactory of jewsharps at Troy. It is said that there are only two others in the country—one in New York, and the other in Boston. A simpler instrument than the jewsharp it would be hard to conceive, but the process of manufacture comprises no fewer than thirty separate operations. The inventor of that humble instrument, which has been vibrating all over the world for centuries, is unknown to fame. At the beginning of the present century the jewsharp was developed by combining several different instruments, each with a separate pitch, and in 1827 Eulenstein, a native of Wurtemberg, made a sensation in London by playing upon sixteen at once.

—

THE Arabs have a passion for flowers, and as soon as their spring commences even the poorest and most ragged may be seen with a delicately-scented blossom stuck above his ear, the stalk resting amid the folds of his turban, and the flower projecting forward over his dark cheek. Those who have had thirty years' knowledge of these people, assert that they will almost go without bread to buy flowers. And there is something in the sight of a gaunt toil-worn Arab, whose sole garment may consist of a piece of coarse sacking and a ragged old turban, with a bunch of delicate spring blossoms drooping their cool freshness against his swarthy cheek, which stirs a strange mingling of sympathy, pity and admiration.

—

ACCORDING to a recent writer, but half of the 52,000,000 people of the United States can be reckoned in the working force of the nation. The earnings of this working force, male and female, cannot exceed an average of $1 a day each for the 365 days of the year, so that the annual income of the people, in round numbers is $10,000,000,000. He estimates that the sustenance of our population averages forty-five cents a day for each man, woman and child, so that ninety cents of every dollar earned is consumed, leaving but ten per cent. of the annual earnings to maintain existing capital, and increase the nation's wealth. His opinion is that the increase in wealth is less than $500,000,000 annually. His purpose in this exhibit is to encourage economy. Learn to work more thoroughly, more savingly; to raise as much as possible with as little waste as possible, is his injunction. The lesson which he teaches is the one which of all peoples on earth the people of the United States need to learn.

—

A SIGNIFICANT feature of the use of electric lights in agriculture, and one pregnant with great possibilities for the insect tormented farmer, is, a London paper thinks, the wonderful inducement which the light offers to all sorts and conditions of insects to attempt multitudinous suicide by banging their heads against the crystal globe all through the night and the small hours of the morning. A simple mechanical arrangement, in the shape of a grated trap, into which the impulsive creatures could fall, and whence they could not extricate themselves, would assist them to complete their work of self-destruction. That a single electric light near a hop-garden or a corn-field would completely exterminate many dreaded insects, is, of course, not certain, but it is possible—perilously possible for the bugs and beetles.

—

THE population of the earth has long been a fascinating study for statisticians Behm and Wagner, who have just published an amended edition of a former work in Germany. They give the total as 1,433,897,500—which is about 22,000,000 less than their estimate of two years ago. They have concluded that China has 50,000,000 less that they formerly supposed. There has thus been an actual increase of about 38,000,000 in the population of the globe—an increase, however, which must be spread over a period of ten years, as many of the recent censuses are decennial. For Europe the present population is rated at 338,743,400, showing an increase of 12,000,000 over the previous figures by the operation of the censuses. In Asia, making allowance for the readjustment of the population of China, there has been an increase of 30,000,000, the present population being set down at 795,591,000. Of course the estimates must be sometimes little better than guesses, for example, for such places as Africa. For this continent, Dr. Rohlfs maintains that an estimate of 100,000,000 is quite enough, while Behm and Wagner retain the old figures of 200,000,000 with considerable hesitation.

—

THE French Chambers have voted a sum of $20,000 for the extirpation of wolves. One of the Paris papers has undertaken the defense of that modest and much maligned animal. It says: "The wolf is a calumniated animal. He is pensive, haughty, prudent and retiring. He keeps his own company, aloof from man, because he knows that he is a victim of prejudice, and that his manners are not attractive. He is not a flatterer like the dog, nor is he a stupid slave like the ass. With great good sense he understands that he is not fitted to shine in society, to amuse an audience like a monkey, or to impress it like an elephant. He is misanthropic, but who can blame him? He is reproached with a partiality for spring lamb. In the first place, he likes it. Vainly shall a whole faculty of philosophers counsel him to adopt a vegetable diet; for all reply he will point to the teeth given him by all-wise Nature. We, too, like spring lamb, and we have the innocent young of the sheep butchered by licensed slaughterers and exposed for sale at a mercenary price. The wolf, unable to buy, has to kill for himself, and this he does in person, after a hundred hesitations, and when impelled by the pangs of famine. 'Hunger,' says the proverb, 'brings the wolf out of the wood,' and this saying, extorted from the reluctant conscience of man, conveys the highest praise of the wolf, implying a mental struggle, a previous repugnancy. Being unable to deal with the butcher, and opposed to the exactions of middle men, the wolf has to call in person on the lamb. He transacts his business with celerity, his good breeding making him averse to causing public scandal. As for the lamb, destined to be eaten anyhow, it can make very little difference to him how he is exterminated; indeed, it is altogether probable that if the lamb's tastes could be ascertained, it would be found that he prefers the healthful excitement of death by the wolf's jaws to the tedious and debasing formalities of the slaughter-house."

THE DATE IN THE RING.

BY S. E. W.

The woman dressed her for farewell
  In snowy silk and lace;
A crown of her braided hair they set
  Above her quiet face,
And on her placid breast they laid
White roses as became a maid.

Her mother bent and kissed her lips,
  And kissed her braided hair,
And folded down the peaceful hands
  Upon the bosom fair,
And, weeping, saw on one a ring,
A little golden time-worn thing.

She took it from the icy hand,
  And looked for rhyme or name,
Something to say why it was there,
  From whose fond thought it came.
She only saw, through many a tear,
A date long past—day, month and year.

"'Twas some school-fellow's gift," she sighed,
  "The child forgot to show,"
And put it back in its own place
  With tender touch and slow;
And saw its tiny glitter rest
Like sunshine on that quiet breast.

Ah, little ring, you kept it well,
  The secret of your date!
Whate'er its meaning, it goes untold
  Beyond the earth and fate;
Pain or blessing—who can say
How much of either in it lay!

We watch the light in our darling's eyes,
  The lines that the slow years bring,
Yet know as little what they mean
  As the secret of the ring.
Joy or sorrow—God only knows
How much of both lies under the rose.

Aunt Tabitha.

BY FLORENCE MEURER.

"BUT we must have new dresses for New Year's Day!" said Audrey Velveton, as she sat on the hearthrug in front of the fire, her shapely arms folded behind her head, her eyes fixed meditatively on the gleam of the shining coals.

"Of course we must," said Muriel, glancing sleepily up from the pages of the book she was reading.

Mrs. Velveton a tall handsome matron, who was arranging Japanese fans on the wall, looked perturbed as the words reached her ears.

"Girls," said she, "don't talk nonsense. Where are we to get the money for new dresses, I'd like to know?

"Besides, there are the lemon-colored silks that you only wore twice."

"Lemon is hideous anywhere except at a ball," said Muriel critically.

"Then there are your white *gros grains*," said Mrs. Velveton.

"I don't dare to think what the dressmaker's bill will be for those two dresses."

"Mamma, if you want us to go into a convent, say so," mildly yawned Audrey, a tall, blonde beauty, with fluffy yellow hair, liquid blue eyes, and a complexion artfully heightened by cosmetics.

"But don't humiliate us by expecting us to wear turned over dresses on New Year's Day, when all the world comes out in their best and brightest garb."

"I'm sure I don't know what to do," said Mrs. Velveton, bursting into tears.

"Why, order two pale blue *damasses*," said Muriel serenely; "and let Madame Elisette make them, and supply the trimmings.

"Then you will be sure to have everything *comme il faut*."

"But two hundred and fifty dollars would not cover the bill!" cried Mrs. Velveton.

"People who move in society must keep up with the times," said Audrey.

"Do you think I have a gold mine at my command?" shrieked Mrs. Velveton, driven nearly to desperation by the placid insistance of her two doll-like daughters.

"Write to aunt Tabby," suggested Muriel, complacently viewing the tip of her satin-slippered foot as it buried itself in the fleecy pile of the white Angora rug.

"I've written until I am ashamed," said Mrs. Velveton hysterically.

"In the last letter I told her that I had opened a boarding-house, and she sent me fifty to help buy furniture for the boarders.

"And how can I have the face to apply to her again?"

"Make up some plausible new story," murmured Muriel.

"What's the use of having an old aunt made of money if you can't squeeze a little out of her now and then?

"Tell her there's somebody dead and there's got to be a funeral."

"That's nonsense," said Mrs. Velveton gloomily.

"Aunt Tabby isn't the fool you take her for!"

"Well, by hook or by crook new dresses we must have," announced Audrey.

"And Soprini must set the table; he does get up the things so stylishly!"

"Couldn't we manage the refreshments ourselves?" said Mrs. Velveton wistfully. "Soprini is so dreadfully extravagant in his charges."

"And when I was a girl, we used to make the chicken salads, and pickled oysters ourselves, and——"

"Oh, when you were a girl!" repeated Muriel, with calm indolence.

"That was in the dark ages of the world, mamma.

"Surely you can't expect us to go back into those times?"

Mrs. Velveton sighed.

She had lived a life of show, excitement, and hollow display.

She had brought up her two handsome daughters to care only for society—to aim only for the goal of rich husbands.

But here they were in their third season, and the Misses Velveton were the Misses Velveton still.

Mrs. Velveton had far outrun her slender income; she was hopelessly in debt, and haunted constantly by the horrible visions of duns, bills and sheriff's sales; and now Audrey and Muriel declared that they must have new dresses for the coming "New Year's Day."

"You must do with the lemon-colored *glaces*, or the white *gros grains*," said she.

"As for anything new, it's entirely out of the question."

"Then," said Audrey, "we'll close the house, and direct Sniffen to say that we are not at home.

"I won't appear at all if I can't appear like a lady!"

Mrs. Velveton looked dismayed.

New Year's Day was notoriously a "Great Exhibition" day so far as the gentlemen were concerned.

There was always a possibility that Muriel and Audrey might make an impression upon some "gilded youth" on New Year's Day, which might happily terminate in matrimony.

Secluding themselves would be social suicide, and Mrs. Velveton was just opening her mouth to remonstrate, when Sniffen, the tall servant-man whom they kept because he was "so much more genteel than a maid," brought in a letter.

"It's from aunt Tabby," cried Mrs. Velveton, and she made haste to open it.

Out fell a check for five hundred dollars, made payable to the order of Venetia Velveton, and signed "Tabitha Clark."

Audrey picked it up with a shriek of delight and surprise.

"The old darling!" she cried. "It's a present for us, of course—a New Year's present!"

"Nothing of the sort!" said Mrs. Velveton, with a gradually elongating visage.

"Listen to what she says, girls."

"MY DEAR NIECE VELVETON,

"This is to inform you that I have received tidings that my grand-niece and your cousin, Mabel Wilton, has been left a orphan at No. — Morton Street, Williamsburg, and that she is in great want. I enclose a check for five hundred dollars in order that you may find her out and purchase for her a respectable outfit and a sewing-machine. The residue of the money, after the above investments have been made, is to pay her expenses at your boarding-house for such time as it may suffice. Pray let me know when the money is all spent. By this plan, I flatter myself that I can be serviceable to both you and her. So no more at present from

Your aunt,
"TABITHA CLARK.

"Cranberry Cottage, December 18—"

"Flinty-hearted old miser!" Audrey said.

"Our boarding-house, indeed!" said Muriel, looking satirically around at the elegant drawing-room, where Sniffen was just lighting the chandelier's wax candles.

"Mable Wilton!" thoughtfully repeated Mrs. Velveton.

"I don't know or care anything about her.

"A factory girl, I suppose—or something of that sort!

"I will tell you what, girls, I have an idea.

"I have a good mind to take this five hundred dollars, and buy your dresses for New Year's.

"It really seems to have come to us quite providentially.

"And then, when New Year's Day is over, I can go to Williamsburg, or wherever it is, and take your cousins a few dollars, and give her a little good advice, and perhaps hire a sewing-machine for her for a month or two.

"The notion of bringing her here, you see, is simply preposterous."

"Of course," said Audrey.

"To be sure," chimed in Muriel.

The new dresses were purchased, and Madame Elisette herself "composed them" to the satisfaction of even the Misses Velveton.

And Soprini received *carte blanche* to set the table, and Vaudoir had the flower order, and Mrs. Velveton congratulated herself that nothing was wanting.

New Year's day came, cold and clear, and glittering, with sparkling snow below, and a heaven of glorious blue above.

Ting-a-ling went the bell before Sniffen had buttoned on his new livery-coat.

"Our first call," said Audrey, giving her pale-blue train a shake-out.

"What antediluvian can it be, to come at this time?"

"I'm sure I can't imagine," said Muriel, posing her face into the regulation delighted smile.

And in walked a little old woman, in a snuff-colored suit and round spectacles, followed by a tall, pale girl, in shabby black.

"Aunt Tabitha!" cried Mrs. Velveton, who, in a *decollete* dress of black satin and a ruby necklace, had just swept into the room.

"Yes," said the old woman, looking keenly around her, "yes, you are right, Venetia—aunt Tabitha and Mabel Wilton!

"How came I here?

"Why, Mabel, in her loneliness and trouble came out to Cranberry Farm and appealed to me.

"To my amusement, she had never even heard of her cousins, the Velvetons.

"The check was duly cashed, as my banker notified me.

"But I said to myself 'Poor Venetia!

"Boarding-house keeping is a grinding business.

"I'll go down myself and see what the trouble is.

"Upon my word, you live in royal style here—with a man-servant and Turkey carpets, and dresses I should say cost a hundred dollars apiece!

"How many boarders do you keep?

"And what do they pay you a week?"

Mrs. Velveton burst into tears.

"I see," said the old dame crisply.

"No, Venetia, don't begin to make excuses.

"You have told me lies enough already.

"I don't want to be deceived any more by you.

"You have deliberately robbed the orphan and the fatherless to add to your vulgar ostentation.

"You are such a fine lady," with a low curtsey, "that you are no longer in need of your old aunt's hard-earned savings.

"I shall adopt Mabel Wilton in your stead, young ladies.

"And I wish you a Happy New Year, and many of them, for you will never see me again!"

And so the old lady went away, with Mabel Wilton in her train.

Muriel and Audrey smiled and simpered through that weary day; and the next day the doors of the Velveton mansion were closed.

The family had left town.

Left heir debts—left their creditors—left all the hollow, false, unreal castle of social position which they had reared so patiently around them all these struggling, ambitious, unprincipled years.

With aunt Tabby's financial supplies entirely withdrawn, they knew too well that further struggle was unavailing.

And Mabel Wilton became the old lady's heiress after all.

A Great Bargain.

BY ERNEST L. SMITH.

FLORA FOUNTAIN was feeding her cage of linnets at the window, where a flourishing vine of dark-green ivy trailed its way up the panes, and a rose-tree was in full bloom.

Flora, at the age of twenty, had been her father's housekeeper for four years, and this morning he had given her a check for fifty dollars.

"To buy a new dinner set of china, my dear," he said pleasantly.

"I intend to invite Gates and Plumer and their wives to dinner in a few days, with young Hayden and the Misses Hazel, and I should like everything to be proper."

"Yes, papa," said Flora.

But the slight curl of her lip told that the families of Plumer and Gates, the Misses Hazel and young Hayden, were scarcely up to her "ideal views of society."

"You might ask Mrs. Penrith Duke, too, if you pleased," said Mr. Fountain incidentally.

"Mrs. Penrith Duke?

"To meet Mrs. Plumer and the Misses Hazel!

"Oh, papa!"

Mr. Fountain shrugged his broad, comfortable shoulders.

"And why not?" said he.

"Is Mrs. Penrith Duke of different flesh and blood from those excellent friends of mine?"

"No, papa," hesitated Flora, a little confused that her inward thoughts had been so readily deciphered; "but she moves in an altogether different circle."

"Well, then, there let her remain," said Mr. Fountain brusquely.

"And as for the china, Flo, exercise your own taste.

"If there is any glass needed, let me know.

"I want everything to be in nice order."

"Papa," hesitated Flora, "is—is business flourishing just now?"

"Pretty fairly, Flo.

"Why do you ask?"

"Oh, papa," burst out the girl, "I do so long for a real camel's hair shawl, like Mrs. Penrith Duke's."

"Nonsense!" decisively uttered Mr. Fountain.

"Camel's hair shawls would be just as inappropriate for people of our rank of life as diamonds or servants in livery.

"This is some of your friend, Mrs. Penrith Duke's mad folly."

Flora colored and hung her head.

"I have always longed for a cashmere shawl, papa," said she.

"Then put it out of your head, for good and all," said Mr. Fountain.

"I can afford no such piece of extravagance; neither would it be appropriate for you to wear one if I could."

"I can't think," sighed Flora to herself, as she watched her father's departing footsteps, "why papa hates Mrs. Penrith Duke so dreadfully.

"I am sure that her friendship to me is invaluable."

And then, having finished the morning care of the birds, Flora Fountain sat down to read the paper.

What pointing finger of fate was it that directed her gaze to the special paragraph of the special column of the morning paper which read—

"Great bargains in camel's-hair shawls. Direct from India. Will be disposed of at private sale, at less than half-price. Apply at No. —— Margin Street."

And within the next five minutes, the postman's whistle sounded loud and clear, and a letter came from cousin Phebe, in Suffolk, to let her know that old aunt Ruellah was dead at last.

"And she has left you her set of antique china, worth nobody knows how much, and all in perfect order," wrote cousin Phebe.

"I have ordered it to be sent to you at once, and you will probably receive it by the end of the week."

A sudden inspiration dawned on Flora Fountain's brain.

"I shall not need the new dinner china now," she thought.

"And I can take papa's check, and—who knows?—perhaps it will help to buy me a real camel's hair shawl.

"I have fifty dollars of my own, and I could borrow—just for a day or two—the money that papa gave me for Betty's wages."

And with quickening pulse, and color deepening on her cheek, Flora put on her bonnet and mantle and prepared to go out.

Never before in all the course of her life had she deliberately set at defiance the wishes and commands of her father; but the influence of Mrs. Penrith Duke, whom she had met at a fashionable watering-place that summer, was stronger than she had any idea of.

Mrs. Penrith Duke had praised Flora's slim, pretty figure, and declared that it was the very form to set off the scented folds of an India shawl.

She had mentioned, incidentally, that a camel's hair was like diamonds, or rare oil-paintings—a life-long investment.

And Flora, listening, had become infected with the yearning desire to possess one of these almost unattainable luxuries.

No. —— Margin Street was a dirty little house, in a dirty little row, close to the docks.

Flora had never been so far east before, and the aspect of things did not strike her agreeably.

"Is this the place where they sell India shawls?" she hesitatingly asked a young girl, with unkempt hair and sullen face, who leaned out of one of the side windows of No. —— Margin Street.

"Don't know anything about it," said the girl indifferently.

"Can't ye spake the lady dacent, Meg?" snarlingly interrupted a fat old woman, looking out over the girl's shoulder.

"It's through the alley, miss, dear—up two pair o' stairs—the little room under the skylight.

"Ask for Mr. Conforto, miss—the sea-capt'in.

"Shure the shawls is great bargains, betoken there ain't been no duty paid on 'em, miss!" with a grin which displayed a few gnarly stumps of teeth in a sunken old jaw.

"Through the alley!"—"up two pair of stairs!"—"a little room under a skylight!"

Instinctively Flora recoiled, and the old woman perceived it at once.

"Shure, miss, I'll go wid yez an' show yez the way," said she.

And not knowing how to refuse this offer, Flora unwillingly followed her waddling footsteps through a dark and dismal alley, across a paved court and up two narrow flights of stairs, to a gloomy, half-lighted room, where a short, vulgar man sat, smoking a black pipe, in the midst of boxes, bales, and bundles.

"Bargains, miss?" said the short, vulgar man, jumping up.

"Cheddah, Bhurlpore, Laees, Valley Bokharah—which will I show you, miss?"

Flora hesitated and colored under his brazen stare.

"I had not made up my mind to buy," she said, "and——"

"Oh, but you must buy!" chattered Captain Conforto.

"You shall buy!

"You can't help buying in a place like this, when I show you what we have got."

And jumping around like an overgrown kangaroo, he unfolded some coarse, high colored striped shawls, one or two with a rivulet of white seeming to meander over dull-red grounds, and some that seemed to have been out in a storm at sea and got thoroughly stained with salt water.

Flora, however, unedu cated in technicalities, was an artist at soul, and recoiled from these gaudy abominations.

"I—I don't quite like these," she hesitated.

"I do not think I will purchase today."

"Not like them!" echoed the sea-captain—if sea-captain he was.

"Not like them!

"Nobody ever said that before to Leotard Conforto!

"I ain't used to be talked to in that there way.

"But if the lady don't like 'em she need not buy 'em.

"I ain't obliged to put my bargains down people's throats, that I ain't!"

And he bustled around, muttering to himself and tossing the things about, brushing past Miss Fountain very disagreeably once or twice as he did so.

Flora turned to go, but her fat guide had unaccountably disappeared, and she was obliged to retrace her steps as best she could.

"At all events," she said to herself, "I'm glad I am well out of that place."

Making the best of her way out, she entered an omnibus to ride home; but when

she put her hand in her pocket to pay her fare, the little purse into which she had so carefully packed her money was gone.

It flashed over her then all in an instant.

Her pocket had been picked: and probably by Captain Leotard Conforto himself.

"Never mind the fare, miss," said the conductor, a stout, fatherly old man, who doubtless had daughters of his own.

"I'll see that it's all right, and you can pay me any time you please."

So Flora got home just in time to burst out crying on her father's shoulder, and confess it all to his kindly ear.

"Oh, papa!" sobbed she.

"I have disobeyed you, and I never can forgive myself!"

Mr. Fountain only patted her cheek and kissed her.

"Don't fret, Flo," said he.

"We've all got life's lessons to learn, and experience is a rigorous teacher."

The police, sent to break up Captain Conforto's den in Margin Street, found nothing and nobody there but a mild old gentleman in spectacles, reading the papers, who had charge of letting the premises.

He had never heard of Captain Conforto; neither was the fat woman, who had acted as volunteer guide to Flora, to be found upstairs or down.

"It's a bad block, this 'ere," said the policeman to Mr. Fountain.

"They call it Swindle Row.

"But they're that slippery hereas nobody can lay a finger on 'em."

So began and ended poor Flora's dream of an India shawl.

And the delusion of worshipping Mrs. Penrith Duke is wearing away also, especially since that high-toned lady gave a *soiree dansante*, and neglected to invite Miss Fountain, observing languidly that "one could not fill one's drawing-room with nobodies."

And Flora has come to the conclusion that perhaps the Gates, the Plumers, and the Hazels of life are as desirable as the Penrith Dukes.

Behind a Fan.

BY HAROLD I. ROSSITER.

A LITTLE white lace affair, which Geraldine Blake had brought from Paris, was her fan.

Everybody said that it was exquisite, and admired the peculiarly delicate perfume which it exhaled.

It was very becoming to her, yet it might have had nothing to do with her engagement to Vivian Stuart, her brother's tutor, that winter.

But her beauty, in its ripe perfection, was something marvellous.

And who should know this better than the man who saw her daily in her home—beheld her morning freshness and unwearied spirits?

Nor did he need to gaze in vain.

Vivian Stuart was not a poor man.

He was the possessor of a fair fortune, a gentleman and a scholar.

Instead of being an inferior at Rosebone, Vivian Stuart was a very important person in the family—as important as Annie Lind was unimportant.

She, once the pride and pet of a wealthy home, was nursery governess at the Blakes' proud mansion.

If the young heart pined in its loveliness and isolation, no one appeared to know or care.

Not that they were unkind.

She was fragile and hazel-eyed; her delicate face was colorless.

She was always busy with the little girls, Clare and Pearl.

And thus it had been for a year.

The engagement between Geraldine Blake and Vivian Stuart was announced in the early spring.

No one was surprised.

"Of course we expected it," said aunt Dorothea, who presided at Rosebone; "and a very suitable match it is considered by all Geraldine's friends.

"Miss Lind, you are going by Geraldine's door.

"Will you let me send her a cup of chocolate by you?

"She will not be down to breakfast this morning."

And without more ado the cup of Sevres china was placed in Annie's slender hand, while aunt Dorothea bustled away.

The nursery governess walked to the door of the breakfast-room, and spoke to a passing servant.

"Martha, take this chocolate to Miss Blake," she said.

Returning, she unfastened Pearl's bib, took Clare by the hand, and went up to the nursery.

"Mith Annie, what make your lip kiver when 'ou speak to me?" inquired little Pearl, with eyes of tender concern.

Annie's hazel eyes were full of pain, and there was a burning red on the soft cheek.

She sank into a chair and looked meditatively about the pretty nursery.

Never now, as she had once dreamed, would she have a home of her own.

And life was so long!

When she was very old and could work no longer, she wondered where she would die.

Meanwhile, Geraldine Blake lay among the snowy pillows of her luxurious bed, her eyes wide open, fixed upon the sunshine which streamed through the plate-glass upon the roses of the velvet carpet.

She was thinking of her recent engagement.

"This is the end!" she murmured, with wide, absent eyes.

"A little strange that she did not say—

"This is the beginning."

The great dark eyes were dreamy, but not unhappy.

There was no love-light in them.

"I wish I could tell somebody who would understand!"

There was a knock at the door; but it was only Martha, with the chocolate.

By-and-by Geraldine Blake rose and dressed.

But for the first time in her life she rouged her cheeks.

The family were at lunch. Vivian Stuart rose and brought her a chair.

"Is your headache better, dear?" inquired Judge Blake, who, however awful a personage he might be to offenders of the civil law, roared very gently in the bosom of his family.

"I never knew you to be ill, Geraldine," remarked aunt Dorothea.

"Oh, I am not ill, aunt Doro; but Mrs. Thornton's rooms were so crowded last night——"

"The ventilation was not good," said Vivian Stuart.

"I will take you to drive after lunch, Geraldine."

Half-an-hour later Annie Lind watched them drive away; and she wished she could be away—away to the end of the earth.

Despite her friends' advice Geraldine Blake dressed that evening for another party.

She had knotted the last ribbon, fastened the last glittering clasp, and taken up her snowy lace fan, when little Clare stole into the room.

"Gerry," she asked, looking intently at her radiant sister, "does you like Mr. Stuart?"

"Yes, I like him," responded Geraldine absently.

"Well, Miss Lind doesn't," returned the child, with emphasis.

"Doesn't she?" responded Geraldine indifferently.

"No; she don't even talk to him.

"Not now," added the child.

"She used to talk with him in the garden, when she took us to walk before breakfast.

"But this afternoon when her flowers rolled out of her lap, just as he came through the lily walk, and he stooped and picked them up, she looked at him just as she does at us when we are naughty—wondering, as if she did not love us at all—and said, just as if she were proud—

"'Let them lie,' and he dropped them and went away as if he felt bad.

"But she isn't proud. 'I picked them up, and she said, 'Thank you dear.'

"She's always good to us, but she don't like Mr. Stuart."

Geraldine did not heed the child's chatter; only the vision of Annie Lind's sweet face, which she had seen daily so many months without heeding, rose before her.

"She is a girl like myself, and she has no interest in my making 'a good match.'

"I wonder if she would understand?"

"You must not keep any more late hours, Geraldine," commanded the judge, next day.

"No, papa," replied Geraldine.

"Mrs. Courtney's is the last of the season."

"Who was that Frenchman who picked up your glove, Geraldine?" asked Vivian Stuart, sitting at the feet of his lady-love.

"No Frenchman.

"It was Captain Julian Wilton, of the navy," she replied; but every bit of color had gone out of her satin cheek. It came back furiously.

"It is very hot in the house," she said, rising.

"I am going down to the grotto."

And Mr. Stuart sauntered after.

The great dog, Emperor, went too.

All around the birds sang, and flowers were blooming.

Entering at the free opening, one found rustic seats, a green gloom, a delicious atmosphere, and the tinkling music of the water.

Here Vivian Stuart spent the long forenoon, watching the perfection of Geraldine's face in shadow, and reading aloud.

It seemed to him, at last, that the green gloom made his beautiful companion's face too pale.

Did it occur to him that Geraldine Blake was twenty-three, and that his might not be the first voice which had read beautiful verse to her?

"Miss Lind," said aunt Dorothea kindly, a few days later, "you are looking very thin and pale.

"Perhaps the heat and the care of the children are too much for your strength.

"I think it must be so, and Martha can take care of them for a few days, while you assist Geraldine to prepare for her father's birthday *fete*.

"They can be excused from their lessons for a week."

"Oh, no!" said Annie faintly.

But the proposed change was as pleasant relief as the friendly words.

With a little warm persuasion—for aunt Dorothea was not unkindly—she yielded, with thanks.

So the two girls went busily about house and garden, planning and suggesting new beauties for both.

"Papa invites everybody—even his worst enemies—on these joyous occasions," said Geraldine.

"I only wish our grounds were twice as large!"

They were in an arbor, weaving a garland of roses, on the evening before the *fete* day.

The sunset light struck Geraldine's dark face with a strange splendor.

Annie Lind looked at her without envy, but a sad admiration.

Thrown into Geraldine's special companionship, she could not dislike her, even though she was Vivian Stuart's affianced.

Geraldine Blake's nature was warm and kind.

She would have been generous to a worm, Annie thought, feeling dwarfed and colorless beside this glowing beauty, whose jeweled hand sparkled among the roses.

Her own little hands fell idly down as her thoughts deepened.

"Are you tired, Annie?" asked Geraldine kindly.

"No," answered Annie.

"But I wish I were as strong as you."

"You are never tired, are you?"

"I am tired of my life this summer," replied Geraldine.

"Annie, I wonder what you would do in my place?

"I do not love Mr. Stuart.

"I love somebody else, who is good, but poor; and no one would be willing for me to marry Captain Wilton, while they all want me to marry Mr. Stuart.

"Captain Wilton is so good, so brave, so kind!

"I have tried all the winter to keep from loving him—I believe I engaged myself to Mr. Stuart just as a sort of safeguard—and I am afraid Captain Wilton suspects it.

"But it is all of no use, I do love him, and I suppose Mr. Vivian Stuart loves me.

"I wish I were dead, and safely out of everybody's way!

"Annie, tell me what you would do?" she asked.

Annie Lind was frightened as she looked into that splendid, tragic face.

"Don't do anything but what is right—please don't!" she said, hurriedly laying a little hand softly on Geraldine's jewelled fingers, for some one was approaching.

It was the man who had been instructed to hang the garlands, and Geraldine rose calmly, though Annie trembled so she could scarcely stand.

All night and all the next day she wondered at Geraldine's coolness.

The beautiful garden was thronged with happy guests.

She heard Captain Wilton's name spoken, and saw a blue-eyed, refined-looking man, in epaulettes, who seemed quite alone in the gay crowd.

But all day he was not to be seen near Geraldine.

Her costume was of white and silver, and she waved her little, white-laced fan.

Annie Lind's dress was also of white, but her ribbons, flowers and fan were blue.

The latter accidentially fell from her hand, and a passing footstep crushed it.

"Take mine," said Geraldine.

"I have so much to do that I am afraid I shall lose it."

So waving the little fan of white lace, as the colored lanterns were hung, Annie passed into the grotto for a moment of coolness and rest.

Vivian Stuart saw the white fan flutter under the vines into the darkness of the secret nook.

He followed.

As soon as Annie heart his voice, she knew he had mistaken her for Geraldine Blake.

He sat beside her on the rustic bench.

"Do you love me?",

There was an instant's silence, broken only by the tinkle of the rill and the distant music of the band.

"Yes!" breathed a voice, too utterly sad for Geraldine's.

But Vivian Stuart had no suspicion of the truth.

He did not see a white figure flit into the grotto, start at finding it occupied, hasten, then pause just inside the further entrance, at his next words.

"Oh, Geraldine!" he groaned, "it's all wrong.

"I respect you, admire you, am fascinated by your beauty, but, before Heaven, my heart of hearts belongs to a little girl whom I basely deserted in her hour of need.

"Three years ago, in her luxurious, happy home, I petted and loved her—won her heart.

"Indolent, selfish, I saw her homeless and poor, and fancying I did not want to marry, suffered her to go forth and labor for her daily bread.

"If I had only asked her then to come to the shelter of these arms!

"Now she despises me!

"But I will perjure myself no further—Geraldine, now you know me, selfish and a coward, you will not say you love me."

"No!" came clearly from the willow opening.

"Your sins be upon your own head—but I love another!"

The crimson light of the fireworks penetrated the gloom as Geraldine parted the willow branches and went out of the grotto.

The two who remained heard her utter a cry—saw the flash of an epaulette; but Vivian was too amazed to think of aught but the delicate white face that momentary light had revealed.

"Annie!" he murmured, you have learned the truth.

"I do not dare to ask for your forgiveness."

A little while before, she would not have believed she could so have spoken, but now the word came very sweetly—

"Vivian, it is yours."

What is to be will be.

In spite of everything and everybody, there were too happy and finally acceptable weddings that fall—Vivian Stuart and Annie Lind, and Geraldine Blake and Captain Wilton.

The latter, chancing to pause under the willow, wondering at the nearness of voices—not knowing of the existence of the grotto—had heard all, and received Geraldine, after her confession, in his arms—as much to her surprise as his.

ABOUT SPIDERS.—The destruction of insects by spiders is enormous. I have counted 250 insects, small and great, hanging entangled in one orb-web.

In one net in Fairmount Park I counted thirty-eight mosquitoes; in another, hung under a bridge at Ashbury Park, and out of reach, there must have been two or three times as many.

Green-head flies by the legion have been seen in the webs that fairly enlace the boat-houses at Atlantic City and Cape May.

The very small spiders prey upon microscopic insects like gnats, and devour myriads.

A glance at the fields, bushes, and trees on a dewy morning in September will reveal an innumerable multitude of webs spread over the landscape, all occupied by spiders of various ages, sizes, and families, and all busy destroying the insect pests of man.

There are several species of spiders, divided into two classes, the sedentary and the wandering spiders.

To the first class belongs the orb-weavers, who make a circular web; the line-weavers, whose web is labyrinthian; the tube-weavers, who hangs their nests on walls or rocks or branches of trees, and the tunnel-weavers, who live in tunnels cut into the earth and having automatic doors ingeniously contrived.

In the wanderers are included the citigrades, whose motions are quick and vivacious; the laterigrades, who have a queer sideways motion, and the saltigrades, who jump and dance and vault.

The dolomede spider is a swimmer, and lives on or under water.

She builds her nest of a detached branch of a tree or bush, which she makes into a tent.

The argiope fasciata, or banded spider, is a silver, yellow and black color.

Spiders are not sociable creatures.

They are generally, on the contrary, of solitary habits, and are mostly cannibals, eating each other with great gusto.

They mate in the spring and autumn, and the mating is often a very trying and dangerous time.

They reverse the order of nature in one respect, for the males are infinitely inferior in every respect to the females, and the latter are well aware of the fact.

Their courtships are scenes of violence, and not of love and peace.

The lady looks with sublime contempt upon the gentlemen, and keeps him at a distance.

He can only approach her by stratagem, and sometimes she nips off one of his legs in her anger, and casts him adrift a cripple.

I have seen poor fellows who have lost four out of their eight legs, and still they were attracted to the opposite sex like moths to a candle.

A spider will never eat her own young, but the males will destroy them when they can.

The mother either goes away or dies soon after the hatching of her eggs, which numbers about one hundred to each nest, and the little ones are thrown upon the world almost as soon as they see light.

There are several varieties, however, who carry their eggs in a silk pouch until they are hatched.

The tube-weavers sometimes care for their young until they are able to get about, and I had a brood of about sixty in my yard until the recent rains destroyed them.

Spiders have numerous enemies, and much of their clever nest-building is designed for protections against these inroads.

Toads and birds destroy them by the thousand, and a little parasite called the ichneumon—a small fly—lays its eggs in the cocoons of the spider, and when the larva appears it feeds first on the spider's eggs and later on the young spiders.

Orb-weavers and line-weavers desert their eggs when laid, and meet their offspring, where they lived so long, as strangers.

Another bitter enemy of the spider is the mud-daubing wasp, who has a process that might be valuable to humanity, if it could be discovered, of keeping a supply of fresh meat.

When they capture a spider that is not needed for present use, they sting it in such a manner that she lives, but has no power to move until such time as the captor is ready to devour her.

It is rather a singular thing that the wasp in its babyhood feeds on meat, but in its maturity eats nothing but the nectar of flowers.

H.C. McC.

A JERSEYMAN went to Mauch Chunk, Pa., to spend his vacation, and during the first night three old hens, which had gone to roost on a tree outside his bedroom window, were disturbed by a cat, and flew into the apartment. The Jerseyman awakened and slashed a pillow around until the bewildered fowls found their way out. The next morning he told his hosts that he should come there every summer, for during the whole night he had seen but three mosquitoes.

The Wager.

BY N. Y. J.

"DECIDEDLY you are mad, my dear de Marsan," said the Count de Tevilly to a young officer of light cavalry, who, holding a glass of wine in his hand, seemed to challenge a dozen of young companions, whom a table splendidly served excited at once to appetite and gaiety.

"Mad as much as you please," answered de Marsan, "but I still renew my proposal I defy you to take from me this snuff-box, either by force or stratagem.

"Do you take it?"

"How many days do you allow me to prove to you your folly?"

"Six."

"Done, then!" cried de Tevilly, "and the stake—"

"A supper as luxurious as this, in eight days at my house."

"Agreed!" cried all the company.

Three days afterwards, de Marsan met de Tevilly in the Palace Royal.

"Well! you feel no ill effects from our joyous night?"

"My dear fellow, you arrange things to a marvel!"

"You think so?"

"Word of honor!"

"In that case give me a pinch of your admirable snuff."

"With pleasure."

De Marsan did not observe the slight smile that passed over his friend's countenance.

They alluded in no way to the foolish wager made by the blaze of lights and over the fumes of wine, which had suggested it; perhaps it was forgotten; however, the two young men separated.

That night, toward eleven o'clock, not far from his house, de Marsan was accosted by two servants, who begged him respectfully to be good enough to stop a moment.

At the same time, a man, enveloped in a long dressing gown, brown with red stars, and preceded by two torch-bearers, appeared in the middle of the street, an enormous beard flowed nearly to the waist of the singular personage, who, approaching de Marsan, bowed, and in a strongly pronounced nasal tone, said—

"How do you do, sir?"

"That is a very extraordinary question," said de Marsan, after a moment's silence, caused by his astonishment.

"It is not the less a question," observed the man with the long beard.

"But, sir, this hour, that dress, these servants——"

"This hour pleases me, this dress suits my position, and these servants are mine.

"For the second time, sir, how do you do."

"What is that to you?"

"A great deal."

"But then——"

"My dear sir, listen: my question is commonplace, I allow it, but here is what I would come to.

"You have a watch, ah! how happy you are!

"I have not, and I take medicine to-night at two o'clock,—not a minute more, not a minute less; you can understand that for the exactitude of the thing I must have your watch——"

"Ah! ah!" cried de Marsan, who began to believe he had encountered a mad man, and hoped to get away by frightening him.

"It is then an ambush!

"Just wait——."

He was about to draw his sword.

The man with the beard made a sign.

In an instant four pistols were pointed at the young man, who, seeing this unanswerable argument, trembling with rage, drew out his watch.

"There, sir," said he abruptly.

"A thousand thanks, dear sir," said the unknown; "I feel much indebted to you for your generous haste," added he, laughing.

"Now let me go."

"Willingly; but I have again a request to make."

"Be quick about it then."

"That sword——"

"My sword?"

"Yes."

"You jest, sir!"

"I give you my word of honor, sir, that I never jest."

"What do you mean, then?"

"This: to-morrow I have a duel, I require a sword, and have taken a fancy to yours; therefore, be so polite as not to refuse me, if not——" he pointed to his armed domestics.

De Marsan flung his sword at the feet of this unsteady personage.

"And now?"

"Now, my dear sir, you are perfectly free."

"It is very fortunate."

"Your way is direct; first to the right, second to the left, then third door to the right——"

"Impertinent!"

"Too well bred to contradict you.

"Accept, my dear sir, the assurance of my profound esteem, and my most sincere gratitude."

De Marsan had scarcely gone ten paces, before a voice called him—

"Sir!"

"Again?"

"Yes."

"What do you want?"

"Will you be good enough to give me a pinch of snuff?"

"The plague stifle you!

"Here, take it!"

"Oh! the beautiful snuff-box!

"How splendidly it glitters in the moonlight!

"It belongs to you, sir?"

"What do you ask?"

"That you may do me the honor to reply, sir."

"Well! yes—it belongs to me.

"What then?"

"Why then?

"Why, I think that it will be much better in my hands than in yours."

"Why so?"

"Because I shall not let it be stolen."

"Ah! you will——"

"As you see."

"And if I say it is mine——"

"You shall be shot that moment."

"And if I give you this snuff-box?" continued de Marsan.

"I will accept it."

"Think that it is a gift from the Duchess of Berry, and that to-morrow I will have all the police on your track."

"I authorize you, sir."

"There, then!"

"Heaven be with you!

"I am happy to have made your acquaintance in such an agreeable manner."

Freed at length from his tormentor, de Marsan made semblance to return home, but, instead, concealed himself in the angle of the street; from thence he saw his thief stop before a *porte-cochere* of sumptuous appearance, enter mysteriously into the house—then, nothing more, silence complete.

An instant after, de Marsan thunders at this door in a manner to wake the dead.

They open it; a servant shows his face only half-awake.

"What do you want?"

"Your master?"

"Is in bed."

"Tell him I must see him."

"Impossible."

"I must, his life is menaced," said de Marsan, in a whisper.

"Oh! in that case follow me."

They mount, de Marsan enters a handsome apartment, and sees a man already of a certain age, preparing to enter his bed.

"Hush!" said de Marsan.

"Hush, sir! dress yourself, and give me arms."

"What does that signify?"

"It signifies that there are assassins hidden in the house; the wretches have just robbed me of everything."

"Oh, Heaven!" cried the old man; "and when?"

"This instant, even; the thief and assassin, for I suppose that his intention is to murder you to-night, had on a dressing-gown, brown with red stars."

"A dressing-gown," stammered the old man, horror-struck.

"Yes, sir."

"Brown?"

"Yes, sir, with red stars."

"Merciful heaven!" groaned the old man, striking his forehead in despair.

"My son, a robber!

"Oh, my friend! come up with me, and confound this miserable Etienne!"

"Etienne!" thought de Marsan.

"Oh! the infamous——.

"This is then where his passion for play has led him.

"Come."

They reach his room: they enter.

De Marsan nearly falls over a long black beard lying on the carpet, while from behind an alcove they heard loud peals of laughter.

"Do you dare," cried the old man, in a voice of thunder.

"Ah! my father, let me laugh," said a voice from the alcove; at the same time the owner of the voice made himself visible, a young man advanced.

It was de Tevilly.

"Here, take back your snuff-box," said he to de Marsan, who stood stupefied, and a little ashamed.

The supper gained by the Count de Tevilly took place; and the adventure was long talked of in the gay circles of Paris.

THE WHITE JASMINE.—We are told, that, before its arrival in France, the white jasmine sojourned in Italy; a duke of Tuscany was its first possessor; tormented by envy, this duke wished to enjoy alone so charming a possession, and forbade his gardener to give away a single stalk, a single flower. The gardener would have been faithful had he never known love; but he prepared a bouquet for the birthday of his mistress, and to make it still more precious, added a branch of jasmine. The young girl, to preserve the freshness of this foreign flower, put it in the ground; the branch remained green all the year, and the following spring was covered with flowers; she profited by the instructions of her lover, and cultivated her jasmine, which multiplied itself under her tender care. She was poor, her lover was not rich, a prudent mother refused to unite their poverty: but love had worked a miracle for them, and the girl profited by it; she sold her jasmine, and sold them so well that she amassed a little treasure, with which she enriched her lover. The girls of Tuscany, to preserve the remembrance of this adventure, always wear a bouquet of jasmine on their marriage-day; and they have a saying, that a girl, worthy to wear this bouquet, is rich enough to make the fortune of her husband.

THE Prince of Wales leads a bull-dog around by a string. That shows that he is not proud. If he was to lead his bull-dog around with an eighteen carat gold chain studded with diamonds, his mother's subjects would be apt to say that he was putting on too many airs.

RAISING THE DEAD.

ONE of the most famous to whom credulous history gave this power, was a German known as Cornelius Agrippa. He was born in the year 1486, and he was one of the most celebrated men of his time.

But he was a man of the most violent passions and of great instability of temper.

He was of consequence exposed to memorable vicissitudes.

He had great reputation as an astrologer, and was assiduous in the cultivation of chemistry.

He had the reputation of possessing the philosopher's stone, and was incessantly experiencing the privations of poverty.

He was subject to great persecutions, and was repeatedly imprisoned.

After a life of storms and perpetual vicissitude, he died in 1534, aged forty-eight years.

Extraordinary stories that have been told of him on the subject of magic.

The first of them is chiefly interesting [illegible] as it is connected with the history of one of the [illegible] ornaments of our early English poetry, Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, who suffered death at the close of the reign of king Henry VIII.

The earl of Surrey, we are told, became acquainted with Cornelius Agrippa at the court of John George, elector of Saxony.

On this occasion were present, besides the Englishnobleman, Erasmus, and many other persons eminent in the republic of letters.

These persons showed themselves enamored of the reports that had been spread of Agrippa, and desired him before the elector to exhibit something memorable.

One entreated him to call up Plautus, and show him as he appeared in garb and countenance when he ground corn in the mill. Another before all things desired to see Ovid.

But Erasmus earnestly requested to behold Tully in the act of delivering his oration for Roscius.

This proposal carried the most votes; and, after marshalling the concourse of spectators, Tully appeared at the command of Agrippa, and from the rostrum pronounced the oration, precisely in the words in which it has been handed down to us, with such astonishing animation, so fervent an exaltation of spirit, and such soul-stirring gestures, that all the persons present were ready, like the Romans of old, to pronounce him clear of every charge that had been brought against him.

The story adds, that, when Sir Thomas More was at the same place, Agrippa showed him the whole destruction of Troy in a dream.

To Thomas Lord Cromwell he exhibited in a perspective glass king Henry VIII. and all his lords hunting in the forest at Windsor.

To Charles V. he showed David, Solomon, Gideon, and the rest, with the Nine Worthies, in their habits and similitude as they had lived.

Lord Surrey, in the mean time [illegible] requested he would [illegible] to call, to set before him his mistress, the fair Geraldine, showing at the same time what she did, and with whom she talked.

Agrippa accordingly exhibited his magic glass, in which the noble poet saw his beautiful dame, sick, weeping upon her bed, and inconsolable for the absence of her admirer.

It is now known that the sole authority for this tale is Thomas Nash, the dramatist, in his Adventures of Jack Wilton, printed in the year 1595.

[illegible] always kept a demon attendant upon him, in the shape of a black dog.

When he lay on his death-bed, he was earnestly exhorted to repent of his sins.

Being in consequence struck with a deep contrition, he took hold of the dog, and removed from him a collar studded with nails, which formed a necromantic inscription, at the same time saying to him, 'Begone, wretched animal, which has been the cause of my entire destruction!'

It is added, that the dog immediately ran away, and plunged himself in the river Saone, after which it was seen no more.

It is further related of Agrippa, as of many other magicians, that he was in the habit, when he regaled himself at an inn, of paying his bill in counterfeit money, which at the time of payment appeared of sterling value, but in a few days after became pieces of horn and shells.

FASHION.—A fashion writer says: "The very word fashion was the name of an English dressmaker of the last century, who was quite as celebrated in her day as Worth has been in this century. Miss Fashion lived in Hanover square, London, I believe a square noted for its court dressmakers even now. Miss Fashion, on account of her celebrity, was soon called only Worth, and Mr. Worth is called only Worth, not Mr. Worth. Miss Fashion's taste was so great that every dress of taste and elegance was called fashion. 'It is the fashion,' and the be-all and the end-all of taste. From taste to the fashion the step was very short.

SPANISH WRITERS.—Some philanthropists might be disposed to suggest, that education now being within the reach of all might find outlets wherever they exist, or, if nourish new [illegible] germs of the poor; but it [illegible] upon this supposition, that almost every Spanish writer [illegible] blood and war [illegible] have sprung from the lowest ranks of life.

HOW GOLD IS SENT ABROAD.

AN idea current in Wall street is that the Bank of America has a cooper-shop attachment.

This is scarcely true, however, though the great array of kegs which sometimes are rolled out all day from the rear of the institution would seem to give color to the belief.

The kegs are considerably smaller than those which usually ornament beer-saloon sidewalks, and they are always new.

But, to those conversant with the subject, the interesting feature of these kegs is their contents.

Each keg contains $50,000 in clear gold.

"On an average," said a prominent shipper recently, "a million of dollars sent across to London will lose—well—a few dollars."

Pressed to estimate more definitely, the shipper said, "A few dollars. Oh, that's about enough."

What the Wall street man considered "a few dollars" was shown by reference to the account-books of one of the heaviest houses in the street.

Taking shipments of $1,000,000 recently made, one was found to have fallen short in the voyage a fraction more than nine ounces, another a fraction more than 18 ounces, another a fraction more than 19 ounces, while in a shipment of $75,000 there was a loss of a fraction more than 10 ounces.

The average loss can be safely estimated at 10 ounces on a million-dollar shipment.

Gold being worth $16 an ounce, sends the "few dollars" up to about $2 a[illegible].

[illegible] dollar offset [illegible] in Great Britain it is declared that a shipment from the Bank of Edinburgh down town to the Bank of England will cause the loss of an appreciable percentage, and a Government officer said very recently that a bag of coin cannot be carried down Wall street a single block from the Sub-Treasury to the Custom-house without an abrasion which is discoverable.

It is popularly supposed that all gold received from this side of the ocean by the Bank of England is reassayed there before [illegible].

This is probably strictly true of gold shipped in bars, and also, perhaps, of coin which shows wear or loss by abrasion.

The Bank of England managers have tried to convince the world that they assay every ounce of gold received.

But the president of a prominent Wall street bank characterized this assumption as one of the "petty humbugs" which filled the atmosphere breathed out from behind the counters of the Bank of England.

"I always placed some faith in the statement of a re-assay of all gold taken in by the Bank," added he, "until a year or so ago when there was a sudden influx of gold into the United States from England. Fully two-thirds of that gold came here in the shape of United States coin, and this too, in face of the fact that we had shipped no such quantity of coin to England in a long time.

"This coin came from the vaults of the Bank of England, where it evidently had been treasured, and not melted and assayed as the directors of that big institution would fain convince us poor Yankees.

"Yes, indeed, there's a vast deal of humbug about the Bank of England's pretensions in matters such as these."

There is occasionally an interesting item of expense of another nature, the mere entry of which on an account book would be apt to puzzle the man not acquainted with all the petty details of shipping.

"Sixty bags" is the charge recently sent from London to one big New York shipper.

This signified that the cooper here in fastening the iron bands upon the specie kegs had driven his nails through the bags containing the coin.

The result was that the London agents of the New York house were obliged to repack every bag so torn, be the hole ever so slight, before it could be placed on the English market.

The cost of new bags was a trivial matter, but it is of trivial matters that the man who handles millions is generally most careful.

Shippers of gold to Europe frequently find it much more favorable to their interests to sell to bullion brokers than to deal with the Bank of England. London bullion brokers very often are willing to pay as much as an eighth of a penny or even a farthing per ounce above the bank rate. Under such circumstances the average New Yorker does not deal with the bank. Ask in Wall street at what rate it pays to ship gold, and nine cases out of ten the answer will be "four-ninety." Sometime ago $4.80½ to the pound sterling was considered the shipping point; but gold has increased in value [illegible] and can be sold there for [illegible] value of [illegible]. Practical operations have shown that a shipment can be made at $4.89½—equivalent to buying here a three-days' sight bill for that amount.

AN ARM of the Sea. The hearing, &c.

"Can Hardly Realize the Good it Has Done."

A lady whose general health has been [illegible] writes: "I was [illegible] to use [illegible]. In writing to the agent, she says: 'It has done me so much good [illegible] I can hardly realize the good it has done me. All I can say is, I [illegible] it.' Our [illegible] are unsolicited testimonials of nature, action, and results, with [illegible] of cases, sent free on application. DR. STARKEY & PALEN, 1109 and 1111 Girard street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Our Young Folks.

ROBINSON AND FRIDAY.

BY I. D. E.

A FAIR stretch of blue sea, flecked with the golden sunlight of a summer's afternoon.

Pretty shells and many-tinted seaweed lay strewn on the damp sand like toys they had tossed aside in careless sport—at least such was Allie and Freddie Morton's opinion; but then they were highly imaginative young folk indeed.

And no wonder, living their innocent little lives away as they were doing in such lonely content at Coves Cottage, situated behind the rocks, with their grandmamma—the sweetest, dearest, most gentle old lady who ever wore spectacles.

They had three brothers, Tom, Will, and Hugh, who went to and from school, called their wee brother and sister shrimps and sprats, and wrote long letters to their parents in India.

Today, they were going a long, jolly sail—they and a chum of theirs, Artie Brown—to some famous ruins, a good afternoon's sail there and back.

Their bark came sailing by as the children delved, and dabbled, and fished for seaweed, with old John, the owner of the said bark, the Saucy Sue, sitting like Wisdom amid Folly and Mirth.

The children hailed them as they went past, laughing, and chattering, and singing snatches of songs.

"Take us with you," shouted the little chiming voice of Allie, a sudden desire sweeping over the small maiden to form one of the pleasure party.

"No, we can't; we haven't got room," came in boyish tones from Tom.

"We'd screw up ever so little," piped the two in chorus as the boat went drifting out.

"We don't want anything so little as you young sprats," were the words the wind brought them in reply.

"We'll wait here till you come back, and maybe you'll take us in."

"Better not, or the tide'll be in and snap you up."

"We shall.

It was but a faint scream borne out to them and then the boat drifted out and out into the very heart of the sunlight.

It might have been a long, lonely day, so distinctly white were its sails, and the yellow gilt and the oars—

"I know what we'll do.

"We'll play Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday; that's better than going sailing away to spidery ruins," suggested Freddie, who, with his little sister, had been reading that wonderful book, till their brothers declared they must have Robinson Crusoe on the brain.

"So we will; and we'll wait for the boat, same as they waited for the ship.

"And we'll fish, and eat shell-fishes, cause they were fishes once; and have seaweed for—oh! something same as they did," remembering his companions' little sister.

Thus the two Robinsons watched the ours away, and when the tide came in at last to bring Crusoe's friend or foe to the shore, a wee boy was perched upon its highest spring towards the land-locked nightfall, watching for the ship which never came. And the sky, as it were, had changed its face; the sun was glinting fiery red in the west, clouds were creeping over, dark and lowering; and slowly the waters began closing them in.

And where was the boat, which went out so blithely into the heart of the sunlight now so long ago?

Ho! ho! they were a romping party which landed therefrom; chaffing old John, challenging him to run races with them, and inviting him to lunch with them in the ghost's chamber in the old ruins.

"No, no, young gents; I'll just sit down and smoke my pipe by the old gal"—the Saucy Sue, landed high and dry on the beach—"and wait for ye to come back.

"Mind, don't be late, for 'tis high tide tonight, and I don't like the looks o' some'at there," cried he, pointing to where a cloud was rising above the horizon, no bigger than a man's hand.

"All right; you're always seeing visions of bad weather, John, when we're out for fun."

"Ay! ay! well for ye that ye have some un to see visions for ye, for never an eye for foul weather have any mad-headed young turks o' gentlemen got," quoth the sailor, sitting down in the shadow of the boat, and taking out his pipe.

The dreamy afternoon stole on apace, that cloud the size of a man's hand holding on yet never deceiving old weather-wise John.

Now, it got the better of him at last.

Maybe he dozed, may not, at any rate, he seemed to have been off guard a brief space, and when he regarded it again, lo! it was covering the heavens.

"Ho, the crazy-headed young gentlemen!" he cried at the sight thereof, rising and scudding away to the ruins.

"But he mustered them at last; they were marching down before him to where lay the Saucy Sue by the heaving sea.

"Ah, John, a wise weather-seer you are!" laughed Tom, slapping the old man on the back, but growing grave

"Now, lads, no gammon—'tis real earnest the sailor-boys—we haven't got to take to the oars."

Dread proved a too correct shot over them athwart the waters, for soon they were tossing amid vexed foam.

Old John's hand was now at the rudder, now tightening a rope, or shifting the sail, for the wind was fitful, well-nigh heeling them over once and again.

And it was dead against them, driving them whither they would not.

Now in the trough of the sea, now drifting near the fatal Whirlpool; would they ever be out of the turmoil, the toil, and the danger?

Would those wee watchers, panting out the brief moments of their life in their simplicity and peril, ever see them come riding in to land, defying the storm?

Ho! ho! the boat with its pale-faced freight—it hardly sailor has escaped the Whirlpool, aided by Him, in the hollow of whose hand the sea is held; they have passed the white foamy tumult by, and old John's mouth relaxes from its firm, grim line of stern resolve and unshrinking energy.

"Now we'll up wi' the sail again and run alongshore into land quite 'speditious;" and didn't they scud along!

Ah! the wind taking them home with a will; nought but John's skilful hand could have managed the sail, and there he stood, strong and brave in his experience, while Tom steered as for dear life.

"I'm glad those sprats of children never came with us," he shouted to his companions.

"Yes; but what if they did as they said; waited for us?" quoth Will.

"God grant they hain't, young sir," returned John, "or the tide ha' taken them; and 'tis high to-night.

"Never a crook nor crany alongshore but 'll be washed to-night."

"Oh, John, they wouldn't stay and let the tide catch them!"

"Folks with old heads have done it, times over."

A terrible sickness clutched at the hearts of the three brothers.

"Ha! there's a sight for ye," cried John, pointing with his finger as they swept round the bend.

Two little dishevelled mites, like a couple of ruffled, affrighted fledglings cowering, shrinking, kneeling, may be praying their childish prayers to the God of weak children, in the recess of their famed hut, the cave that could not save them from death.

The waves were mounting and leaping and reaching after them with their terrible white fingers.

Poor little Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday! truly, these were worse than savages, which would not be driven back or affrighted.

"'Twill have to be now or never, lads," said John, shifting the sail and running in toward the foaming breakers, where their boat would not live a minute.

"I must e'en swim in, lads, and trust to ——" the old man glanced away towards his cottage home.

"Trust to God," said Tom, a white anguish in his young face.

"Ay, ay, lad! Amen!"

It was [illegible]

He hauled down the sail.

"Hold to the rudder; don't let her go till I come back;" and now he was struggling and battling in the water with all his strength and will, while the boys strained their eyes and held their breath.

There! a wave held the children in its embrace at last!

No; John was fighting for them.

Now Freddie clung to his shoulder, Allie he held folded in one strong arm, while he beat through the ranks of his watery enemy with the other.

Ho! ho! the rain! the wind! the tempest!

It was all like a shadowy picture enveloped in a mist—a mist of rain; the coming back to the boat, the gathering of the little wet things into coats and jackets—and then the landing in safety at last.

"'It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not,'" said John, in his humble piety, as he saw them all safe under their grandmamma's sheltering wing that evening.

And, oh! a great love, a great thoughtfulness for others, a great awakening of all that is high and noble, and sweetly generous in life, had its birth among the children from that afternoon of peril and adventure.

KISSING THE TOE.—In Gautier's "Constantinople of To-day" there is an account of the ceremony of kissing the Sultan's toe, an honor which is reserved for the Vizier, Ministers, and certain privileged Pashas. [illegible] is performed with the utmost seriousness and is marked by every sign of respect worthy of so important an occasion. Referring to the custom of kissing the Pope's toe, Matthew of Westminster says it originated through a servant's having cut off his master's hand, which it was usual to kiss; the hand of his Holiness, but toward the close of the eighth century a certain woman, when making an offering to the Pope, not only kissed his hand, but committed the terrible outrage of squeezing it. The Pope, seeing the danger to which he was thus exposed, cut off his hand, and by this means escaped the contamination to which he had been rendered liable. Since that time the precaution has been taken of kissing the Pope's toe instead of his hand. When the ceremony of kissing the Pope's toe takes place, he wears on the occasion a slipper with a cross.

MANY men have no will to die, yet they are carried to the grave with a will.

☞ The Diamond Dyes always do more than they claim to do. Color over that old dress. It will look like new. Only 10 cents.

BOTH SAVED.

BY J. [illegible].

IT was a lonely road in the wild western country, and a fierce storm of wind and rain was making the night wild enough.

Charlie St. John, accustomed as he was to roughing it about the world, shrunk and [illegible] the driving blast which swept about the [illegible] curtain, and urged his jaded steed onward, peering eagerly through the darkness in the hope of seeing a welcome light.

Nor was he disappointed.

As he rounded a curve in the road, a light from the window of what appeared to be an old inn streamed across the wet ground, and a moment later he had reined up close to the door stone and was beating a hurried tattoo upon the entrance with his riding-whip.

There were sounds of coarse laughter and jesting within, which ceased abruptly at St. John's rather imperious summons; and after some delay the door was opened by a girl of seventeen—a girl whose rich wild beauty caught Charlie's quick eye instantly.

Soft masses of jetty hair curled in close, boyish rings all over a dainty, erect head.

Her skin was of a clear olive, with cheeks exquisitely flushed, and lips like ripe strawberries.

Her eyes were magnificent, large, soft, and startled like the eyes of some timid, wild creature, and the lashes were long and curling.

She wore a short black woolen petticoat, and a jacket of coarse red flannel, and holding her flickering candle high above her head, she looked at Charlie in mute inquiry.

"Can I have shelter for myself and horse?" he asked, lowering his bluff tones to the softer key in which he always addressed any of his mother's sex.

The girl turned, and opening an inner door, addressed some words in a low voice to some person or persons within; and directly a big, villainous looking man made his appearance and looked St. John over suspiciously.

"May as well state your name and business before I engage to put you up, stranger," he said.

"That's easily done," replied Charlie, with a careless laugh, although he was far from liking the man's appearance.

"I am St. John, from Yarmouth, just now, where I have been with a drove of cattle.

"The weather is too rough to get on further to-night, and I'll pay you well for a lodging."

A grim smile flitted across the man's dark face as he turned silently to a little closet in the entry, from which he took a cap and a lantern, and then proceeded to escort St. John to the stable.

After attending to the wants of his horse, the young man followed his host to the house, where, in a wide, uncarpeted room, odorous with whisky and tobacco smoke, a supper of ham and eggs and coarse bread was served him by the beautiful girl who had answered his knock.

There were two men smoking before the fire, one almost exactly like the dark-browed host, the other, a younger man with a bullet head, and gross, sensual features.

St. John noticed that the latter's gaze followed the girl everywhere, and that if by any chance her eyes met his, she would turn away with an uncontrollable shiver of disgust.

The three men were disposed to be very civil to Charlie, and he met their advances with an affectation of careless good humor which he was far from feeling.

He was quite sure that he had alighted upon a nest of unscrupulous villians.

His warm heart was full of pity for the beautiful young girl, whose eyes turned now and then upon him with a strange look of wistfulness and dumb warning in their dark depths.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when he was shown to an upper room, and immediately upon being left alone, he went to fasten the door.

There was no lock upon it.

The only heavy piece of furniture in the room was the old high-posted bedstead; and when Charlie endeavored to move this up against the door, he discovered that it was fastened, singularly enough, to its position in the corner.

He was examining his revolvers carefully, when a little tap on the door of what he had taken to be a closet, aroused him, and stepping across the room he swung it open.

The strange young girl stood there in a tiny square entry, and behind her another door opened into an apartment which was shrouded in darkness.

She was trembling from head to foot, and the rich color had quite forsaken her face.

"They are plotting to murder you," she whispered hurriedly; "I have come to warn you.

"You must go away at once."

"Why should they harm me?" queried Charlie boldly, as he smiled reassuringly at the girl.

"They think you have money—come at once; there is no time to lose.

"They are black—black to each heart's core."

And clasping her slim fingers over his wrist, she drew him after her, through another room, down a winding flight of stairs, across a long entry, and out into the night.

The violence of the storm had somewhat abated, but it was still dark and raw, and some fine rain-drops fell upon Charlie's uncovered head.

His guide led him around to the rear of the stable, and then for the first time she opened the dark-lantern which she carried.

Charlie saw that his horse stood there ready saddled beside another.

The girl looked [illegible] from behind a loose board, and drawing a coarse handkerchief from her pocket, she knotted it securely over her fiery curls, and then looked up at Charlie, wistfully and eagerly.

"Will you take me with you?" she said.

The young man flushed and smiled a little as he looked at her.

But the girl's great eyes met his own, innocently and beseechingly, like a child's.

"You don't know how horrible my life is here," she said, in low, rapid tones.

"They—my uncle and his brother—are determined to marry me to the young man with [illegible]

"I shall die first.

"Let me go with you!

"Oh, take me away from this dreadful place!

"Look here, little girl," said Charlie, gruffly; "I've knocked about the world considerable, and I'm no end of a rough fellow.

"But Charlie St. John isn't the chap to go back on a woman, and if you can trust me, I'll do the square thing, sure as preaching."

Charlie caught his breath suddenly at the smile which transfigured the girl's face as she raised his hand to her lips.

A moment later they rode carefully from the yard and dashed down the dark and muddy turnpike.

Side by side through the darkness they rode, hour after hour, until a faint glimmer of dawn showed that the clouds were breaking.

A mile before them lay the city, its church spires pointing heavenwards, and the smoke of its many chimneys rising in waving lines.

Charlie, who had been turning over a strange thought in his brain, turned to smile down into the white weary girl's face at his side, with a new tenderness softening the [illegible]

"Little girl, it ain't safe for you to go out into the world; and if you don't mind taking such a rough fellow for a husband, I'll try to make things easy for you."

Her lips quivered, and great tears rushed to her eyes.

"But you know nothing of me," she said.

"As much as you know of me," was Charlie's answer; "I will take good care of you.

"I own a good farm just beyond the city, and the dearest old mother in the world is waiting there in my house.

"Will you have me?

"And, by the way, I don't even know my wife's name!" he added laughingly.

"My name is Lois—Lois Strong," she answered; "and I will try to be a good wife to you."

It was high noon when Charlie led her into a wide, sunny room, where a mild-eyed old lady was spreading the table for dinner.

"Mother," he said, "this is my wife.

"I found her in the strangest way; and she saved my life last night.

"I will tell you about it presently.

"You must love her for my sake."

The old lady looked at the shy, wistful, blushing, young face through her spectacles.

"Dear, you are welcome," she said, kissing the girl's cheek kindly.

"Charles has a good heart, though he is a little wild at times.

"We will have some dinner, and then my son shall tell your story after your own fashion."

And so Lois left the old hateful life behind, and began a new and happy existence as St. John's wife.

RAILWAY BRAKES.—A French technical journal points out the following as the conditions which a perfect continuous railway brake for heavy fast trains should fulfil: First, the brake power should be applied to all the wheels of the cars throughout the trains. Second, the power by which the power by which the blocks are forced upon the wheels should be adequate to skidding them upon the speed becoming moderately reduced. Third, the driver should have the whole of the brake power of the train completely under his command, and be able to apply it at a moment's notice. Fourth, the guards should individually possess the like means of applying the continuous brake. Fifth, the power in hand should be susceptible of easy modulation. Sixth, full brake application should not require more than a very moderate effort. Seventh, the pressure should be steady and distributed as equally as possible over all wheels and acting upon them with the intervention of some elastic medium to prevent too sudden and violent action.

FIFTEEN men employed in a steam planing-mill, where the treacherous buzz-saw holds high carnival, took a census of their fingers a few days ago and were surprised to find that they averaged as many as four digits apiece.

*** "Do boldly what you do at all." Boldly do we affirm that Kidney-Wort is the great remedy for liver, bowels and kidney diseases, rheumatism and piles you've ever before it. The tonic effect of Kidney-Wort is produced by its cleansing and purifying action on the blood. Where there is a [illegible] deposit in the urine, or [illegible] or [illegible] disordered kidneys, it always cures.

LOVE AND TIME.

BY F. E. WEATHERLY.

Love and Time one summer's day
Sat and talked together;
Love took up his lute to play,
And sang in the golden weather;

"Life's a fair and brimming cup,
Sparkling, fresh and mellow;
Quaff it gayly, drink it up,
Time's a surly fellow!"

Time looked up and gazed at him,
Half contempt, half pity;
Calmly smiling, grave and grim,
Thus took up the ditty:

"All the world is growing gray,
Sere, and brown, and yellow,
You'll be older too, some day,
Silly little fellow."

Love rose up and ran away,
Leaving Time in shadow,
All the golden summer day,
Singing through the meadow:

"Silly, silly though I be,
There's no need to flout me,
Though the world may laugh at me,
It cannot do without me."

THE ORIGIN OF CUSTOMS.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of our lives is regulated by certain rules of behavior, which at first sight appear to be merely arbitrary conventions consciously chosen as symbols of respect and good will.

Spencer, in his book on "Ceremonial Institutions," shows that these formal observances—ceremonies of state, religion, and social life—are not thus deliberately chosen, but have their origin in spontaneous manifestations of emotion, from which they gradually evolve, as a natural product of social life.

A good example of the gradual evolution of an apparently arbitrary convention, is afforded by Spencer's explanation of the simplest form of salute—the familiar nod. A man passing a friend in the street greets him with a slight nod. Why? Because it is the custom. But why has custom adopted this particular form of salute? Let us follow Spencer as he traces it from its origin. A dog afraid of being beaten, crouches before his master. A small dog alarmed at the approach of a big one, sometimes throws itself down, and rolls over on its back. Both these actions are signs of submission—spontaneous expressions of a desire to conciliate the more powerful.

That this is their true interpretation there can be little doubt, on comparing them with the parallel behavior of some uncivilized tribes. In an African tribe, visited by Livingstone, by way of salute "they throw themselves on their backs on the ground, and rolling from side to side, slap the outside of their thighs, as expressions of thankfulness and welcome." Here we have the spontaneous expression of two elements of propitiatory behavior—submission to a superior, and joy at his presence. In other tribes this complete form of obeisance is abridged, and various modifications of it are found. Prostration on the face is common. A slight further abridgment of this gives us the attitude of kneeling while the head rests on the ground.

In past ages, when the Emperor of Russia was crowned, the nobility did homage by bending down their heads, and knocking them at his feet to the very ground.

A further modification is produced by the desire to do homage while approaching a superior. In Dahomey they "crawl like snakes, or shuffle forward on their knees." This brings us to the attitude of going on all-fours; and a still further modification gives the attitude of kneeling. Slightly less abject is kneeling on one knee; and the next step is merely bending the knee. The Japanese "salute a superior officer by kneeling; but in the street merely make a motion as if they were going to kneel." Next, omitting the bend of the knee, all that remains is the bend of the body which accompanied the more complete salutes; hence we get the bow, indicating respect; and this passes by insensible transitions from the humble salaam of the Hindoo to the familiar nod of an intimate friend. The transition is so gradual, and the intermediate phases so abundantly exemplified, that it is impossible to doubt that such is the true derivation of the trivial act of modern etiquette.

Similar in origin is the raising of the hat as a respectful salute. In primitive states the conquered man surrenders himself, his weapons, and whatever of his clothing is worth having, hence, stripping becomes a mark of submission.

Cook, for instance, relates of some Tahitians, "they took off a great part of their clothes, and put them on us." In another tribe this ceremony is abridged to the presentation of the girdle only. In Abyssinia inferiors strip to the girdle before superiors. A further abridgment is found among the natives of the Gold Coast, who salute Europeans by slightly removing their robe from the left shoulder; but even there special respect is shown by completely uncovering the shoulder. In other tribes they also doff the cap. Hence, it seems that "the removal of the hat among European peoples, often reduced among ourselves to touching the hat, is a remnant of that process of unclothing himself, by which in early times the captives expressed the yielding up of all he had."

Kissing is a natural expression of affection; and it is curious to note the analogous manifestations among animals and some of the lower tribes of men. A dog displays his affection for his master by licking his hand. A ewe distinguishes her lamb by the olfactory sense, and apparently derives pleasure from its exercise. The same sense is used among men not only to distinguish, as in the case of Jacob and Isaac, but also as a mark of affection.

The foregoing examples will suffice to illustrate the method by which many of the so-called "conventions" of civilized life are shown to be "natural products of social life."

Grains of Gold.

Zealously labor for the right.

Yield not to discouragement.

Silence is the severest criticism.

Man's unjust, but God is just.

Don't start the day's work without a good breakfast.

Don't sleep in a room without ventilation of some kind.

Don't stuff a cold lest you be next obliged to starve a fever.

Flowers, leaves, fruit, are the air-woven children of light.

Our to-days and yesterdays are the blocks with which we build.

Every one is eagle-eyed to see another's faults and deformity.

Nature supplies the raw material, education is the manufacturer.

When credulity comes from the heart it does no harm to the intellect.

The foundation of political happiness is confidence in the integrity of man.

Bashfulness has as little in common with modesty as impudence has with courage.

When we are in good health, troubles are pleasures; in illness, pleasures are troubles.

The foundation of all happiness, temporal and eternal, is reliance on the goodness of God.

Honorable industry travels the same road with duty; and Providence has closely linked both with happiness.

As steady application to work is the healthiest training for every individual, so is it the best discipline of a State.

Our minds are as different as our faces; we are all traveling to our destination—happiness. But few go the same road.

Love is the great instrument and engine of nature—the bond and cement of society, the spring and spirit of the universe.

Some rocks cannot prevent the course of a river; over human obstacles events roll onward without being turned aside.

How common to see wealthy people who have to resort to arrogance of manner to prevent their innate vulgarity from being detected.

If the beautiful and good are not always united, we can only say that they ought to be so, for they belong to each other as the blossom and the fruit.

Some of our finest exotics have been imported from barren deserts—some of our noblest ideas have been the offspring of an uncultivated mind.

Let no one think that he alone has dark hours. They are the common lot of humanity. They are the touchstone to try whether we are current coin or not.

What a freshness and flavor is there upon the soul when daily watered with the actions of a true and virtuous life. Whatsoever is pure, is also pleasant.

Habits, whether good or bad, are easily formed when one is young; but when one gets up in years it is very difficult and often dangerous to set them aside.

To say that a man is advanced too high to condescend to teach the ignorant, is as much as to say that the sun is in too high a place to shine upon what is below him.

It is a thing morally impossible for persons proud and ambitious to frame their minds to an impartial, unbiased consideration of a religion that teaches nothing but self-denial and the cross.

Say not, if people do good to us we will do good to them, and if people oppress us we will oppress them; but resolve that if people do good to you you will do good to them, and if they oppress you, oppress them not again.

There may be countless rational creatures in the universe besides mankind, and superior in happiness and intellect to man in his present condition, for it must be remembered that a very small portion of the universe is occupied by man.

Femininities.

A young Boston widow this season wore a bathing dress of full mourning.

A young country lady of Missouri slashed an insulting fop with a knife. She probably wanted to cut a swell.

In Floyd county, Tenn., last week, four brothers named Burnett married four sisters named named Beary.

Women are never so color-blind that they can't see the make-up of a new bonnet passing along fifty feet away.

The world and all things in it are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

The rag carpets of our grandmothers are coming into fashion in the shape of large rugs for bedrooms and nurseries.

White pique waistcoats, with collars rolling over the velvet or cloth collar of tailor-made jackets, are much worn by young girls in Europe.

It has been ungallantly said that the telephone does what society rules have always been unequal to—compels women who use it to talk one at a time.

The young woman who sneeringly remarks that men are alike, generally shows her great sincerity by taking the first man that offers himself to her.

A local Mrs. Malaprop gushingly says that she "does so love to sit at the piano in the gloaming and impoverish." This Malapropism is not improvised.

Miss Lilliphace says she uses powder merely to take the shine off her face; but Fogg has an idea that she uses it to take the shine off the other women's faces.

Custom compels an Icelander to kiss every woman he meets. What surprises him the most is the unusual number of old maids that are always going the wrong way.

Centreville, Iowa, has a novelty in the way of a cornet band, consisting of eleven young ladies—all pretty girls. They will make their first public display in a few days.

There are few husbands whom the wife cannot win in the long run, by patience and love, unless they are harder than the rocks, which the soft waters penetrate in time.

They were cousins and lived in Boston, and she said in Bostonese: "If our grandmother had had but one daughter instead of two, we should have been brother and sister, darling."

An Indianapolis paper says that "Miss Nora Landis, living near York, works in the harvest field during the day and entertains her company with piano recitals during the evening."

Almost all women will give a sympathizing hearing to men who are in love. Be they ever so old they grow young again in that conversation, and renew their own early time. Men are not quite so generous.

The Prince de Conti exacted the present of a ring from every female he honored with his love. At his death, these rings numbered several thousands. He had also two thousand five hundred snuff-boxes.

A Chicago girl of thirteen is exposed as a professional burglar. Instructed in crime by an old woman, she entered some house nearly every night, and the booty recovered had been taken from numerous different places.

Certain excavations recently made in Nevada revealed in the sandstone the distinct impress of a woman's foot, 19 inches long, left there ages and ages ago. And yet they have been playing Chicago off on us as a modern city!

Emma Lake, the circus rider, is the wife of Gilbert Robinson. Although she is a professional athlete, she declares that she cannot successfully defend herself against his fists, and therefore she sues in Cincinnati for a divorce.

The clergymen of Springfield, Ill., have undertaken to discourage young folks from going to Justices to get married. They do not care for the loss of fees, but they regard marriage as a ceremony that ought to be religiously solemnized.

An Illinois couple eloped so hurriedly that the girl went barefooted. The fellow's pride defeated their object, for he insisted on delaying to buy her a pair of shoes, and thus her father was enabled to overtake them before they succeeded in reaching a minister.

Defending the action of Bishop Lefleche, of Three Rivers, Canada, in assailing women's frizzes, a Montreal rector said in a sermon: "There is such extravagance nowadays that we cannot tell the difference between mistress and maid. I defy any one to do it."

Women cannot maintain their rights until they display more courage. Let me say to you, in the words of a famous French orator, "Courage, courage, courage!" At this stage of the proceedings somebody threw a box of caterpillars upon the platform, and the meeting broke up in great terror and confusion.

It is serenely claimed by a Bradford editor that a young lady in charge of a local telephone office has such dulcet tones that when she is talking through the instrument the wire between the stations becomes an Æolian harp, and the little birds fly out to roost on the line, in order to learn new music for their songs.

A woman bathed in a red flannel costume last summer at Rye Beach, and a cow in a neighboring field made a dive for her, and for a time there was more surf than Neptune had provided. They had to kill the cow in order to get the woman safely back to her bath house. That was the alternative of killing the woman to get the cow back to her grass.

The mother of Gambetta, the French statesman, who died recently, was treated in the noblest manner by her son. She was not well educated, was very provincial, and betrayed both facts by almost the first word of her conversation. She had few of the qualities which fit a lady to take part in grand society. But Gambetta was never ashamed of her, and honored her before the world with as much loyalty as if she had been of the noblest blood.

News Notes.

Vinnie Ream keeps forty pet doves.

Jackson, Miss., has 30 marriage associations.

A San Francisco maiden refused to marry a real, live lord.

St. Louis' society is gradually returning to its French flats.

Young ladies of New Orleans have rose-bud lunch parties.

Hans Makart, the Vienna painter, has married a ballet girl.

Mississippi has one insane person to every 800 of her population.

A Kentucky centenarian danced all day at a barbecue last week.

England derived last year $2,760,000 from the duty on carriages.

A young lady of Missouri recently stabbed a fop who insulted her.

Watermelon seeds are now utilized for a soup called a puree of melon.

The sale of plain black velvet this autumn is greater than for several years.

A number of women will stump Nebraska this fall in behalf of woman suffrage.

There are over 100 New Yorkers who have over 12,000 volumes in their libraries.

There are nearly one hundred cases of divorce on file in the Court of Common Pleas in this city.

Pictures, consoles, and mirrors of different kinds throughout the house are now framed in plush.

"How do you do, Lord A—?" is the proper form, whether he is Marquis, Earl, Viscount, or Baron.

According to the most recent and reliable statistics, one French duel out of every eighty ends fatally.

Ninety millions of unused bland dollars are now piled up in the vaults of the United States Treasury.

A gold mine has been discovered at Marlboro, Mass. At a depth of 22 feet they find $25.00 of gold to the ton.

Cardinal Newman was a skilful violin player in his earlier years, and even now, when over 80, he plays well.

Miss Aline Taylor won the first prize in a competitive swimming match held in the St. Louis Natatorium for ladies.

A Texas paper publishes an account of the lynching of two negroes in that State under the head of "Sporting Notes."

An American abroad is always known because when he purchases an article he pockets the change without counting it.

In Buenos Ayres it takes ten dollars in paper money to buy one dollar in gold. The paper currency there is depreciated.

A London lunatic fasted 21 days, and then died, while food was being forced down his throat, from excitement and exhaustion.

A St. Louis man who painted a lamp-post every evening for two weeks, saw his marks on the backs of ninety different loafers.

French artisans are now making smoking pipes of a quality pronounced equal to the meerschaum, from celluloid obtained from potatoes.

It is proposed to honor the memory of Roger Williams by naming after him the principal streets in several towns and cities of Rhode Island.

Mrs. John Murphy, of East St. Louis, Ill., awoke the other night to find a burglar in her room. She attacked him with a pillow and drove him out.

A new school house was needed at Streator, Ill., but as the town treasury was empty, Mayor Plumb built a fine one at a cost to himself of $40,000.

The Southern farmers are endeavoring to raise mammoth watermelons—not merely for show and money, but to prevent the darkies from toting them away.

A washboiler used for a cradle was the sight which greeted the eyes of a policeman on visiting a poor family in one of the alleys of Baltimore a few days since.

The Spanish lead product is greater than that of any other nation on the globe. She produced 125,000 tons last year, against 110,000 tons produced in the United States.

W. W. Hackney, of Brownville, Neb., measured a stalk of corn several times, and found that it had grown four inches in one day, and five inches in another.

The electric light in the lighthouse at Sydney, N. S. W., will be the largest of the kind in the world. The merging beam is said to have a luminous intensity exceeding 12,000,000 candles.

A large private garden in a suburb of San Francisco is to be made a labyrinth, by means of thick foliage and winding paths, so that a person might wander in it for hours without finding his way out.

The explosion of a kerosene lamp at Plymouth, Me., did not hurt Mrs. Miles much, and the loss of the dress which she wore was of small account; but in a burned pocket was $1,300 in paper money.

A French army officer was traveling by rail from Paris to Lyons. His trunk exploded, killing two men, and ruining a large amount of baggage. He had packed some cartridges among his wardrobe.

A book agent had the misfortune to break his leg at a camp-meeting in Butler, Ga., the other day, and while the sympathizers were gathered around, as two surgeons set the limb, he sold three copies of his book.

New Publications.

"The Hidden Record; or, the Old Sea Mystery," by E. W. Blaisdell, just published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, is a love story literally packed with action and incident, the interest of which is of the most intense description. The scene is laid principally in New York, though some of the episodes take place in Cuba and on the ocean. The style of composition is clear and vigorous, not a word is wasted, everything being directly to the point. The character-sketching merits much praise, every personage, from the highest to the lowest, being pictured in life-tint. T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Publishers, Philadelphia. Price, 75 cents.

A very neatly engraved picture containing portraits and reduced fac-similes of some of the leading journals and journalists of this country has been issued by the Travelers Insurance Co., Hartford, Conn. In its way it is the neatest thing of the kind we have seen.

MAGAZINES.

The October number of *Vick's Floral Guide* is the perfection of its kind. Everything it contains in the way of illustrations, matter, etc., is the very best. One number indeed is worth a year's subscription. Every lover of flowers should have it. James Vick, Rochester, New York, $1.25 per year.

Our Little Ones and the Nursery for October, closes volume II, and is, if anything, better than the numbers which preceded it. Its matter and illustrations are just suited to entertaining and instructing smaller children. Russell Publishing Co., Boston, Mass. Subscription, $1.50 per year.

MUSIC.

The *Musical World*, published by S. Brainard's Sons, Cleveland and Chicago, still continues to make good its claim of being the best musical magazine published. The present number contains some thirty pages of reading matter of the first value to those interested in music, and decidedly entertaining to all. Besides this, there are five splendid pieces of music, printed on fine paper, and in themselves worth treble the price of the magazine. Subscription only $1.50 per year.

DYING WORDS OF THE GREAT.—Doctor Johnson, passing away amid a tumult of uneasiness and fear, said to one who stood close behind his bed, "God bless you, my dear!" The celebrated Dr. Adams, rector of the high school of Edinburg, in some moments of delirium preceding his death, murmured, "It is growing dark, boys;" and waving forth his hand, "you may go!" Queen Elizabeth, of England, lying on her royal couch, was heard to moan out the heartrending words, as she closed her eyes forever, "All my possessions for one moment of time!" But the noble Wesley simply exclaimed, in calmness of spirit, "The best of all is, God is with us." Poor Robert Burns, out of his head when he drew his last breath, cried, "Oh, don't let the awkward squad fire over me!" How curious, indeed, that Lord Thurlow should have cried out, as he passed away, "I'm shot, if I don't believe I'm dying!" "Ah! you cannot cry as much for me as I have made you laugh in my time!" so said the brilliant wit of France, Scarron, as he lay dying that hour with a host of weeping friends around him. It was a Christian philosopher like John Locke who exclaimed, with his latest breath that solemn day, "Oh, the depth of the riches of the goodness and knowledge of God!" How strange to think that the great Mirabeau, after a life of such wild discord, should have cried out frantically, as he lay waiting for the last change, "Music! Let me die to the sound of delicious music!" Washington, with the smile of a saint, looked up into the face of his weeping wife for the last time as she bent over him at Mount Vernon that dismal day, and calmly said, as he crossed his arms over his noble heart, "It is well." And the last words of Luther's friend, Melancthon, are wonderfully striking. The former asked him that hour if he desired anything. "No, Luther. Nothing, nothing but Heaven!" he answered, and died with a smile upon his face. The ruling passion may be said to have been still strong with Chesterfield when he passed away, for the last words he uttered were "Give Dayrolles a chair!" Did poor Cowper say anything before he died—he who had always dreaded even the thought of dying? Why it is said he sank to rest as peacefully as a little child. Ah, but what did Hobbes, the deist, say just before he gasped his last breath? "I am taking a fearful leap in the dark;" but the sweet Herbert said, "Now, Lord, receive my soul!" Dear Goldsmith's physician asked him a few moments before he ceased to breathe if his mind was at ease. His mournful answer was, "No, it is not!" And yet was not Goldsmith as lovely a character, at heart, as any man who ever lived? The deaf Beethoven, whose whole soul had been full of glorious harmony throughout his life, cried out at last, "Now, I shall hear!" May we not cherish the hope that Byron's thoughts were of God and heaven when he said at last, so wearily, "I must sleep now?" The sun was shining very brightly in the room when the great Humboldt lay dying, and he said, as he watched the beautiful rays, "How grand the sunlight! It seems to beckon earth to heaven!" John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died the same day, but one said with his last breath, "Independence forever!" and the other, "I resign my soul to God—and my daughter to my country." Hood, tired out, whispered only the words, "Dying, dying!"

"Presenting the Bride" Heard From

Port Oxford, Oregon, August 29, '82.

Editor Post—I received the picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and all who have seen it are delighted with it. You may look for some subscribers from me shortly, as many of my friends expressed a desire to subscribe, and how could they feel otherwise, with such a paper, and such a premium!

J. W. C.

Clinton, Ia., August 30, '82.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," came to hand all right. I cannot find language to express my thanks to you for the beautiful premium. I have received many premiums, but yours leads them all. Will send some subscriptions soon.

M. C.

Stratford, August 24, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—I received the beautiful picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of my most sanguine expectations. Shall see what I can do for you in the way of subscribers.

W. H. H.

Missentowa, D. C., August 12, '82.

Editor Post—The picture premium, "Presenting the Bride," received. It is beautiful, and I am very much pleased with it. All who have seen the picture think it is just superb. Expect to get you numerous subscribers in a few days.

K. L. O'N.

Oquawka, Ill., August 22, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—The picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and in good condition. I am much pleased with it, indeed. I have shown it to some of my neighbors, and they all unite with me in voting it beautiful. Will send you some subscribers soon.

H. R. C.

Chehalis, Wash. Ter., August 13, '82.

Editor Post—Have received my picture, "Presenting the Bride," and was surprised at its marvelous beauty. I am well pleased with it. I have shown it to several of my friends, and all say it is the handsomest and most valuable premium they ever saw.

A. M.

Pearsal, Tex., August 12, '82.

Editors Post—I received my premium for The Post, for which accept thanks. It is the most beautiful premium I ever saw.

U. S. F.

Chattanooga, August 17, '82.

Editor Post—I received your premium picture yesterday all sound, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of the premiums usually offered by newspapers, and certainly ought to bring you many subscribers. Am quite proud of it.

W. E. B.

Verndale, Minn., August 12, '82.

Editor Post—I received my Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," and think it very beautiful. Had it framed and hung up two hours after its arrival. It is admired by everybody.

F. E. B.

Jamestown, Ind., August 13, '82.

Editor Post—I received my premium last night, and think it very beautiful. I will with pleasure aid you in raising your subscription list, and I think I can get a great many subscribers for you.

I. F. D.

Peconic, La., August 18, '82.

Editor Post—The premium picture, "Presenting the Bride" received, and I consider it grand. I have shown it to several of my friends, and each and every one of them pronounce it beautiful.

O. G. P.

Berlinton, Ind., August 16, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—My beautiful premium Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," came duly to hand, and it is even better than you claimed it to be. I will see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers.

G. W. H.

Makand, Pa., August 17, '82.

Editor Post—I have received premium, "Presenting the Bride." It far surpasses my most sanguine expectations—perfectly lovely! Will get some subscribers for you.

I. L.

York, Pa., August 14, '82.

Editor Post—"Presenting the Bride" was delivered to me yesterday, and am highly pleased with it. We consider it a gem. Have given it a conspicuous place in our gallery for the inspection of our friends.

J. W. S.

Leesburgh, Kans., August 12, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Paper and premium received. THE POST is a splendid literary journal. And the picture is very handsome. Am greatly pleased with it. Everyone who has seen the picture considers it grand.

G. G.

Columbiaville, Mich. August 12, '82.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," is indeed a beautiful gift of art, and cannot fail to please the most fastidious. Many thanks.

F. S. M.

Belvidere, Pa., August 18, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your magnificent premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," at hand, and think it very beautiful. I am greatly pleased with it, and thank you very much for such a beautiful present. I have shown it to quite a number of people, and they all say it is the prettiest and richest premium they have ever had the pleasure of beholding. Will do all that lies in my power to increase your subscription list.

W. F. S.

Mount Pleasant, August 21, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," was duly received, and am more than pleased with it. It is by far the handsomest picture I ever saw.

G. L.

Humorous.

The Turk and the man who steps on a banana-skin have much in common. For instance, they both sit down without asking for a chair.

It is a blessed good thing to witness a brand new play, because there is no danger of the idiot behind you telling his friend what's going to happen next.

The English complain that leather is found in American sausages; and American manufacturers will be so good after this as to take off the collar before using.

I have a philanthropic friend who has spent all his money on the human race, and he does not brag of it either; but, the fact is, he unfortunately bet on the wrong man.

Several of our exchanges are devoting considerable space to the importance of "cooking girls." It's no use. We don't want them cooked. The raw damsel is good enough for us.

Little Lottie to her friend: "I have so many cares. Yesterday a little baby sister arrived and papa is on a journey. It was but a piece of luck that mamma was home to take care of it."

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FEVER AND AGUE.

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It will in a few moments, when taken according to directions, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Summer Complaints, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Colic, Wind in the Bowels, and all Internal Pains.

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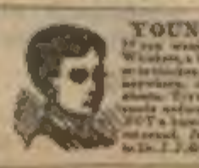

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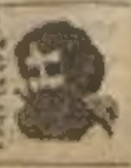

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THERE is a certain novelty in the elegance of dress at the present day which distinguishes it from that of other epochs. Although last winter fashion was characterized by extreme luxury and richness—jewels, the richest laces, and expensive bead embroideries being employed; yet the new toilettes for this winter seems to have attained a richness and elegance dreamded of never before. The day of stiff narrow skirt, is past, and art is lending its utmost aid to assist in producing the graceful, flowing lines and general suppleness which ought to belong to the human figure.

Toilettes for autumn street-wear are simple and severe in style. Pleated skirts are rapidly ousting other styles, especially the bouillonne skirt, which is very difficult to wear well, and utterly lacks the suppleness and grace so necessary for a well-setting skirt.

The kilted pleats are most popular, and nothing is prettier than a dress of cashmere or voile, with large chequers, made with a pleated skirt and simple drapery, the corsage being of plain-colored cloth.

This style has often been mentioned before, but when a really fashionable style is of such elegance and simplicity, its adoption by people of taste is to be recommended. It is an economical dress, and economy in certain respects, though lavish luxury exists side by side with it, is the order of the day.

Of course, by economy we do not refer to the turning of dresses and the many shifts obligatory with those who have not an income of a certain standing, as they cannot follow all the vagaries of fashion, which alter and call for new toilettes every week. But a pitfall exists for those also who have a craving for incessant novelty, as they adopt every change, no matter how ill-chosen and outrageous it may be.

Unfortunately, there are many such modes, and consequently when a new mode is thoroughly elegant and reasonable it is eagerly adopted.

The corsage of a different color from the toilette is a decidedly elegant economy, as one corsage can be worn with two or even more skirts of well-chosen colors. Thus a navy-blue corsage could be worn with a grey chequered skirt, a plaid of many colors containing navy-blue amongst them, with fawn, with pale-blue, with pink, with cream, with salmon, etc., especially if the material be chequered with another or the same color in a darker shade.

Special attention should be paid to the form of the sleeves this season. It is indispensable that they should be short and very tight-fitting, the tailor-cut corsage, worn with an upright linen collar, being the only kind made with long sleeves. The armhole needs great attention, as on its shape depends the fit of the sleeve; it should follow the natural curve and joint of the shoulder.

It is on these details that the style of the costume depends, and they should therefore be carefully attended to, as nothing gives such a common, countrified appearance to a costume as an old-fashioned manner of cutting and neglect of the minor details of fashion.

Dressed in printed cotton a lady is always well attired if her skirt falls gracefully, and if her corsage is well cut and well fitting, with each part in its place; but the richest fabric now used would have a vulgar, tawdry effect, far worse than if poorer, simpler material were used, if the toilette is badly made and ill-fitting, and finished off without skill or taste.

Thus to be in fashion and elegantly clothed, rich, expensive material are not indispensable is a skilful cut and ability to drape on the part of the dressmaker, and a tasteful, harmonious choice of colors on the part of the wearer.

A very elegant costume, made in the prevailing style for walking dresses with a fine cloth jacket, is in great favor with young married ladies and is also much worn by young girls of fifteen or sixteen.

It has a pleated skirt of thin tartan woolen material or voile, the chosen plaid being in harmonious colors, such as blue and old-gold, shaded autumn tints, etc. the tablier and back drapery are made with plaid scarfs, and the corsage is a jacket of fine cloth matching the prevailing tint of the skirt, handsomely braided on the basques, neck, and sleeves, and fastened with hussar brandenburgs covering the plastron.

When worn by young girls this toilette, so simple and suitable for them, is finished off by a large linen collar and cuffs, fastened by fancy jewelry, and a large straw hat trimmed with feathers and lined with surah matching the cloth.

Jackets richly braided like a hussar's uniform are now in great request; they are worn over many styles of skirts as well as pleated skirts of tartan.

Fireside Chat.

COMMON SENSE IN DRESSING.

THIS is not meant to be an essay upon fashionable attire, nor a column addressed to the wealthiest section of society. I prefer writing for the people of moderate means—for ladies whose walk through life is chiefly amongst scenes of moderate requirements.

Of course the very wealthy, and those who belong exclusively to the upper-ten, need no dissertation upon dress, nor any hint how to economise and how to look well upon limited resources. I have very frequently been asked the question, "How much ought a lady to spend annually upon dress?" It is a query which cannot be answered without some deliberation, and a due regard to the means and requirements of the person in question. One lady may spend hundreds annually upon her clothing, nor can she be said to be extravagent; her fortune and position entitle her to do so. Whilst, on the other hand, another has for years past dressed well and becomingly on a tithe of that sum; a small sum rather than a large and has always contrived, on this small sum, to look perfectly neat and lady-like.

One fact, however, remains undisputed. There are ladies who will dress better and look nicer, taste and management being so largely concerned in the matter.

For my own part, I consider it the extreme of bad management and the very worst economy, to purchase any article of an inferior kind. It fills me with amazement from day to day to hear ladies boasting of how cheaply they have obtained certain articles of clothing, whereas in reality such would have been dear at any price, being utterly valueless for wear.

I am not unfrequently shown cheap boots, and I hold my peace and say nothing, until it is suggested to me, as it sometimes is, that it would be for my advantage to possess myself of similar wares, and that duplicates of these lauded articles are still to be had.

Then I smile, and say I cannot afford to buy them, which, although apparently paradoxical, is a plain unvarnished truth. To go to the best houses and purchase the best goods is the surest economy; better wear is obtained, and an appearance of respectability is visible to the very last.

Persons of moderate means should, as a rule, dress in black, or dark colors, as such are not conspicuous, and consequently do not tell their date as lighter articles do. A blue dress, for instance, or a red feather, how plainly they speak the wearer's identity, even at a distance; and how glaringly they tell the length of time they have been in wear!

In selecting a hat or bonnet, be sure to ascertain that the shape suits you, and that it fits your head comfortably. Do not indulge in feathers, still less in flowers, unless your means are such as to enable you to procure the best description, as nothing is more reprehensible or vulgar than cheap finery of any sort.

I have seen some remarkably pretty bonnets, of the new close-fitting style composed entirely of grey, bronze, or black straw, simply trimmed with a scarf of silk or velvet; and such are far more lady-like than the cheap flower-crowned head-pieces which are exhibited in so many milliners' windows.

For a windy day there is nothing half so comfortable as a tightly-fitting toque, but care should be taken that it is scrupulously neat and faultlessly made.

A well-made toque is a graceful, becoming, and most comfortable article of wearing apparel, and, with a neat veil of spotted net closely adjusted over the face and fastened securely behind, will enable the wearer to brave the most stormy elements without fear of having her head-covering blown away or even misplaced.

It is a great improvement if a dark-colored toque be worn to stick a bright pin carelessly in front in a slanting direction, as though securing the top of the veil. To a youthful face it is always becoming, as it takes off the too solemn appearance and lightens up the general effect.

Jackets should not be worn quite tight, unless the figures is particularly good, and without this important "unless" Newmarkets should not be worn at all. How I wish I could persuade ladies to dispense with this much-abused article of dress, and content themselves, as they used to do, with well-made ulsters, except in cases where the figure is slight and graceful and the purse long enough to admit of a large sum being taken from it and given to a first-class workman—a chef amongst tailors—for procuring the coveted article in perfection.

With what earnestness would I impress upon my sisterhood that dressmakers cannot cut and fit successful garments of this particular class; it is an impossibility with them: they may, and do, profess to be able to do it, but what is the result?

Shoulders crooked, skirts badly hung, seams all away, sleeves wrongly placed, creases about the waist, misfittings about the collar, and machine stitching visible all over the garment.

For travelling or walking there are few costumes more comfortable, nor any which look better on young slight figures, than dark green or brown cloth Newmarkets, with felt hats to correspond, and white or light colored satin scarfs, with gold or pearl pins stuck neatly through.

These coats cannot look well if worn over a dress.

The plan which I have adopted is one not generally known, but is certainly worthy of being so, and it is extremely simple. Get your tailor, when measuring for your coat, to make you a perfectly close-fitting garment of the same colored satin—made without one quarter of an inch of superfluous material—Princesse shaped, the long straight skirt just reaching a shade below the garment to be worn over it, and finished off at the tail with a tiny plaiting of satin, which, appearing from beneath the Newmarket, detracts from the manly appearance of this species of mantle.

The advantages are manifold; not having any pouffes behind, the set of the coat is not interferred with; being of a slippery nature the utmost ease is experienced in putting on and taking off the covering, and should necessity or inclination call for a removal of the coat, a perfectly neat and becoming garment is visible underneath.

The most economical dress for everyday wear is a dark navy-blue serge, and for evening a good white silk.

Morning dresses made with double-breasted bodices are the most becoming, and the warmest; for evening the square-cut bodice and tight elbow-sleeve are the most distingue.

Bodices gathered back and front—or "shirred"—are very pretty, and suit slight figures well, but should never be worn except by such.

Many ladies spoil the fit of their dresses in winter by wearing under-vests. This is a bad habit to give oneself, as, if the vest be left off of an evening, a cold is sure to follow.

I conceive it to be an excellent plan to tack a piece of soft warm flannel around the back and shoulders of the bodice about midway from the neck, and properly shaped to the lining; this imparts a comfortable warmth, and, as a similar piece can be adjusted to the back of an evening bodice, the danger of cold is obviated.

I have known ladies sorely puzzled as to what would look best around their throats with morning dress. Plain collars have rather a stiff appearance; tulle or lisse frillings toss immodintely, and are unsatisfactory as well as expensive.

It is a good plan to purchase a few yards of really good washing lace about an inch and a half in depth; a few minutes will quill or plait it; it can then be cut into suitable lengths and tacked around the necks of dresses, being easily removed and renovated when soiled.

A piece of soft black Spanish lace, folded loosely around the throat, close to the frilling but below it, looks very well, especially if a natural or good artificial flower be worn amongst the folds.

There is also another effective arrangement which can be adopted thus: Buy three yards of scarf lace—a good kind, of course—trim the ends with quillings to match, place it around your neck, leaving nearly all the length in your right hand, the end lying upon the left shoulder, being about half a yard long.

Wind the longer piece twice round the throat, in loose soft folds; and as you will still have a yard and a half or more to spare, festoon it gracefully in front with the aid of a few concealed pins, and fasten a brooch or flower at the side.

Tan gloves are the best for wear. Long silk mittens are extremely pretty in the evening, and shorter ones midway to the elbow, look nice in the house with the half-long sleeves at present so much in vogue.

Before closing my remarks I have a word to say about fur-lined cloaks. They have always seemed to me to be a sort of muffle, quite unsuited for walking, and only fit to be worn as a wrap, in a vehicle, on a cold day.

Apparently made for warmth, they let in every breath of chill air, unless held carefully across; and it is not easy thus to hold them, if one has an umbrella or a parcel to carry, or a muff to hold in the hands. This thought having been constantly present with me, I can suggest a new plan, which can easily be carried out to perfection. Take the pattern of the sleeves of a Mother Hubbard cloak, and the precise measurement of the spot in which they are placed—copy them exactly, and insert them in the fur-lined mantle, binding the inner edges neatly with ribbon to prevent the fur, which was cut, from coming loose. She can by a dressmaker, remove the hood, place a neat full frilling of cashmere and satin around the neck, and a full bow, with long ends, at the back. Put five rows of gathers at the back of the waist, to which attach on the inner side, a band of half-inch black elastic, with a strong hook and eye. This, when fastened, draws the close to the figure and gives it a becoming shape. The band is preferable to a ribbon-string, as it is more readily adjusted and can never get into a knot.

In making the gathers small fragments of the fur may pull with the thread and show on the outside; these should not be plucked at, but simply blackened over with a little ink.

To utilise the hood for going out at night, or for variety to wear with the cloak by day, bind it nicely with black ribbon, leaving long ends for strings to tie in front. The materials required to effect this transformation are: Three-quarters of a yard of cashmere, one yard of black satin, five yards of ribbon for back and sleeve bows, and three yards of binding ribbon.

Ladies who have a taste for dressmaking, and who are handy at their needle, can easily do the work themselves, and will find their labor amply repaid by comfort and additional warmth.

Correspondence.

W. F., (Camden, N. J.)—Brown Russia leather can be cleaned with benzine or benzoline, but you must be careful not to use a light, and so carry out your operation in a room without a fire.

M. W. W., (Baton Rouge, La.)—No solution could have any appreciable effect in rendering wood tougher than it naturally is. Saturation with size or linseed oil would no doubt render wood less liable to splinter.

L. O. M., (Cumberland, Tenn.)—The operation is a very simple one, and can be performed by any expert surgeon. Apply at any general hospital, if you cannot afford to pay a fee. There is no sort of difficulty in the matter.

INFELIX, (Lee, Va.)—We think it is desirable in such a case as that described to make a confidant of some sensible person; and a clergyman is a very suitable person to treat as a friend. Seek the counsel of one of some standing and experience in life.

A. A. G., (Pendleton, W. Va.)—The potato is a tuber composed of starch. It is practically nutritious, as must be evident from the extent to which it is used as food, particularly in Ireland. If you grate a potato into pulp and evaporate it to dryness, you will find the whole solid substance converted into a white powder like arrowroot which is nearly pure starch.

T. S., (Hunterdon, N. J.)—No possible evil can result, except to the bird, from keeping one canary in a bed-room: nor do we think a plant will be harmful. If the canary grow feeble or the plants wither, that would show that the room is not properly ventilated, and the practical hint to let in fresh air would be a valuable one. There is a good deal of nonsense written and spoken on this subject.

MAME, (Laurens, S. C.)—Matrimony is a state which should be well considered before being entered upon. To many it is a desperate thing. The frogs in Æsop were extremely wise; they had a great mind to some water, but they would not leap into the well, because they could not get out again. Montaigne says the land of marriage has this peculiarity—that strangers are desirous of inhabiting it, while its natural inhabitants would willingly be banished thence. Wall.

SEYMOUR, (Montgomery, N. C.)—The "amber" tips of cigarettes are simply varnish, the cigarette papers being dipped in the varnish before being filled. Common amber is itself dissolved to make some kinds of varnish, but a good hard spirit varnish of shellac or kauri gum would do. Dipping the ends of the paper in pure hard paraffin, melted and kept rather hot, would, we should think, answer equally well, as the only object is to render the paper non-absorbent.

COLOR, (Fayette, Pa.)—If there is color-blindness, of course, it is necessary to avoid any occupation which requires the recognition of color. There are, however, scores of callings which do not make any such requirement, and there can be no difficulty in making a selection. We need to know something of the individual to suggest a trade, but you will find that for one requiring a knowledge of color there are twenty which do not. In fact it is only a few trades which need be avoided.

IRENE, (Philadelphia, Pa.)—It is easy to recognize in the letter the tokens of a mischievous habit. Place the mind under discipline. Allow it no time to waste in wild and debilitating imaginings. You are gradually withdrawing from the life of relation in which all healthy folk must live, and developing a self-consciousness which will be most hurtful in its effects. Take instant measures to stop out of self. Abandon the pleasure of mental solitude. Lock up the chambers of imagery, and whether you take an interest in the things about you or not, fill your mind with facts and compel attention to facts.

CON, (New York, N. Y.)—We cannot, for obvious reasons, offer any opinion as to the solvency of a particular commercial organization or the fidelity of its directors. Meanwhile, we confess it does not appear to us that the purchase of stock through an institution constituted on the principle of a building society is an exceptionally desirable proceeding. When a man buys a house through a society, he can live in it and enjoy its advantages' year by year until he has paid off the purchase-money; but, if he purchase stock through a similar agency, he can have no lien on the stock as purchased, and derives no benefit from it until he has paid the money value. Why not deposit the money in a savings-bank which gives interest until enough has been accumulated to buy stock?

J. T. C., (Brooklyn, N. Y.)—The ordinary length of the hair on the head of a woman varies from twenty inches to a yard; in some instances even longer than that; but they are of unusual occurrence; its weight is from five to ten ounces. A contemporary relates an instance where the hair on a lady's head attained the measurement of two yards in length. But its proper length for texture and strength should not exceed twenty-four inches, and its value as long hair is much depreciated in price when it falls shorter. It has been calculated by Withof that the beard grows at the rate of a line and a half per week, which gives a length of six inches and a half in the course of a year, while for a man of eighty years of age, twenty-seven feet would have fallen before the razor. The beard of the Burgomaster Hans Steningen was so long that upon one occasion, having forgotten to fold the same, he trod upon it as he ascended to the central chamber at Bonn, and was thereby thrown down and killed.

CURIOUS, (Chelsea, Mass.)—You inquire whether it is possible to denote a person's character or temperament from the color or quality of the hair. We have seen the language of the hair formulated in the following manner, but we must not ask you to accept it. Straight, lank, stringy-looking hair indicates weakness and cowardice. Curly hair denotes a quick temper. Frizzy hair, set on one's head as if each individual hair were ready to fight its neighbor, denotes coarseness. Black hair denotes persistent resolution in accomplishing an object, also a strong predisposition to avenge wrongs and insults, real or fancied. Brown hair denotes a fondness for life, a friendly disposition, ambition, earnestness of purpose, capacity for business, reliability in friendship in proportion as the hair is fine. Very fine hair indicates an even disposition, a readiness to forgive, with a desire to add to the happiness of others. Persons with very fine light brown or auburn hair, inclined to curl or friz, are quick-tempered, and are given to resentment and revenge. Light brown hair, inclined to redness, with a freckled skin, is a certain indication of deceit, treachery, and a disposition to do something mean to a friend who can no longer be used to advantage.